PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Writing or marking in this book, even for the correction of typographical errors is strictly forbidden. Any defacement or mutilation will be charged to the last borrower preceding the discovery.

SEPTEMBER, 1919 VOL. L, NO. 1

THE BOOKMAN

THE RETURN TO READING

BY JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

THE suggested phrase for these paragraphs—Why This is the Golden Year for Books and Reading—found me in the exact mood of hope capable of its elaboration. My unusual optimism had been the result of a careful study of the temper of the young men back from the war at the front. I was considering them in connection with my profession, the writing of novels; and decided that here was a most extraordinary and new audience, a public clear-eyed and critical, supremely invigorating. However, I was under no illusion in regard to the regenerating influence of war; it was, I knew, simply a great forcing house—the men who went into it honorably returned more inflexibly fixed in their honor, and the braggards bragged with renewed vigor—and the readers, the young men, I was weighing, were those who had always possessed an instinctive sense of justice and good taste.

Before the war, though, they had been neither reflective nor, in any positive sense, readers. They were, more or less, acquainted with the exploits of Raffles, a few of them were devotees of Mr. Wells; but altogether, as was entirely right, they were engaged in life as an actuality rather than as a spectacle. It was only after they had come back from the trenches, from fatal green gases and shrapnel, from the spectacle of companies of men grotesquely or horribly dead, that I found them, patiently critical, addressed to abstract values. They had been, it seemed, a little withdrawn from the necessary petty routine of social existence. I watched them very carefully on golfing fairways, on greens when they failed to hole a putt; and on the verandas at dances; and a score up or down, a one-step filled or lost, concerned them imperceptibly if at all.

A great many trivialities had been blotted from their interests and needs; bathed in primal emotions the artificial had become mere tinsel; and while, obviously, they hadn't retained intact such heroic planes of being, they were forever lost to the purely superficial. It was here that they appeared to me as a new public for the novel, comparatively small, it was true, but capable of infinite extension, of, indeed, the creation of a very wide opinion. I saw them penetrating the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

entire fabric of American life and exposing, with the acid of their supreme experience, countless rotten threads and false designs.

Nothing, I am convinced, indicates the mind, yes, and the morals, of a people so entirely as its novels: the novels that are written and the novels, in varying proportions, they are read; and, even at the danger of acquiring a permanent reputation for pessimism, I am obliged to say that our most widely circulated fiction has very accurately carried our peculiar national defects—an easy sentimentality, pretentiousness, an avoidance of meeting truth squarely, and an almost complete confusion of purity and prudery.

But our most outstanding error, the quality persistently coloring our novels, has been a materialism drawn from all the traits assembled above. Happiness and material success have been regarded as synonymous; the books that have been so enormously admired ended, practically without exception, on the note of the dollar and the legally physical possession of a girl invariably symmetrical and usually blonde.

The struggle set up, the problem solved—inevitably solved—to a superficial view is admirable in its implications, its speeches, punishments and the moral employment of fate; the good, apparently, are left in happiness, the wicked come on disaster. But a closer examination of such merely arbitrary decrees reveals nothing more than an irritating negation of what tragically few compensations we have gained. Armies of men, in these stories, of the most distressing character, leave for the war and return not alone smart and efficient soldiers, possibly enough, but the repositories of every delicate sensibility and virtue.

Only the other day I was immensely entertained by meeting, in an entirely unlooked-for quarter, the poor but upright girl who slapped the prominent clubman's face on a New York avenue. This is typical of our high-minded fiction, fit for all the family; and a more arrant piece of nonsense couldn't well be imagined. This, you see, proceeds on the assumption that, at the opening of a novel, poverty and virtue are one; and that a club—really a mere dull refuge from harassing women—is a lair of seduction. Unhappily good and evil are not so conveniently divided; unhappily no one, by the turning of a page, can find regeneration. Any insistence to the contrary is but a dangerously false drugging of the senses, and a total abrogation of, perhaps, the only conspicuous beauty present in humanity—the fortitude to struggle against insuperable odds.

The truth is that these conventions have been more rigidly observed in fiction than in our life, for, while we have a myriad of splendidly living individuals, we have scarcely any novels at all faithful to such fineness. The reason for this, of course, lies in the fact that our ideals, the coveted ends and rewards of our imagination, are wrongly out of keeping with our best practice, while this, in turn, may be traced to a fundamental lack of existing proportion. The poor, and every degree of possession is a comparative degree of poverty, want to be rich. But they want the richness, principally, that leads to ease, to ease rather than security. They break their hearts to get the things which acquired become nothing but the mark of a fresh extravagance of desire.

I have, however, no moral purpose to forward; I am only attempting an approach to the reason for the falseness of an overwhelming number of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our written stories. There are, as there are in life, distinguished exceptions; and I should not have attempted this paper at all, in view of the submitted title, if I were not convinced that the latter, the exceptions, steadily increased. When now, in support of this, the young men I noted have come back to leaven our inertia with their impatience and necessity for some truth on which to build their serious future and pleasure.

As long as men exist they will take their pleasures with a difference, and there will always be novels for the venal and the obscene as for superior minds; but any golden year for books and readers makes no tally of the former—unfortunately they are always with us and perpetually supplied with pages; it is probable, too, that the vast majority will eternally and inevitably clamor for the facile triumph implied in the term *hero;* but the other, the refreshed sense of actual heroism inherited from the anonymous sacrifice of regiments of simple men, will demand more difficult and higher consummations than cheaply lying plots and paste rewards.

These returned individuals, maimed or with their law practices scattered, their mercantile schemes interrupted or broken, their positions filled or lost in labor agitation, will not, turning to the relief of what we should like to call literature, be easily put off with mock wars and hollow villainies; they will not be satisfied with the mechanical virtue of impossible mannequins, but ask for the beauty of tenderness and honesty, in addition to charm, in the written portraits of the ladies of their choice.

BOOKS I HAVE LOVED AND LOST

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

I

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought.

PERHAPS one needs to have been one of its victims to realize that the passion of book-collecting is literally, to the height and depth of that strong and profound word—a *passion.* There have been, and are, men for whom the love of books not merely passes the love of women, but curiously parallels it in its various manifestations—in its vehemence, its tenderness, even its tragic intensity—yes, even its heart-break. When Charles Lamb spoke of "my midnight *darlings,* my folios", he was not speaking fancifully, for the senses do unmistakably find delicate satisfactions in this strange madness, this bibliomania. No less than the lover of women, the lover of books loves to touch and fondle his "darlings". Leigh Hunt "thought how natural it was in Charles Lamb to give a kiss to an old folio, as I once saw him do to Chapman's 'Homer' "; and it was Leigh Hunt's wish for his own passing that "I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my over-beating temples on a book, and so have the death I most envy".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Surely, as Polonius would say, "This is the very ecstasy of love!"

And, I repeat, such language is not merely fanciful. It is quite natural and instinctive with the speakers, and means just what it says. I do not know whether there is any record of anyone dying of love for a book, but I should be far from surprised to hear that it has happened. No one who has missed some especially "desirable" item on which he had set his heart in a second-hand bookseller's catalogue—and to your collector there is no more delicious and exciting reading—can doubt the possibility of a bookman dying from such a disappointment. No fever of expectancy with which the lover of mere woman watches his mistress's portal, or loiters hour after hour in the starlight in the hope of seeing her shadow on the blind, can surpass the wild perturbation with which I have known men to travel through the early morning to await the taking down of the shutters of an old bookshop, eager to forestall any possible rival for the possession of some particular treasure, guarded like a sultana inside. Yes, I who write have more than once done this very thing. And how vividly I recall the sinking of my heart on one occasion, when, having breathlessly arrived at the bookseller's sleeping door at the quite useless hour of seven, I found my hated rival already there before me, pacing to and fro with obstinate patience. How we glared at each other, never speaking a word! A shabby, sinister little man he was, twice my age—but scarcely old at that, for I was still blissfully on the enchanted side of twenty. As we passed and repassed each other with jealous threatening eyes, I remember wishing that it was still the fashion to carry swords—for it was a lonely quarter of the town, and not a creature stirring but ourselves. When at length the figure of the little bookseller turned the corner of the street, how we both hastened to stand guard at the door, almost shouldering each other, jockeying for position, so to say. How frantically we both rushed at the little bookseller to get the first word . . . and then, in a moment, how the worst had returned to laughter as I realized that my hated rival was no rival at all, but only a poor clerk out of a job who had come thus early in answer to the bookseller's advertisement for a bookkeeper. Naturally, he had concluded that I was on the same errand, just as I, with my *idée fixe*, could conceive of no one's having other business, save my own, with the bookseller at so early an hour. But his business, poor fellow, was grim reality, while mine was of the luxurious stuff of dreams.

My life, *dei gratia*, has not been poor in happy moments, but it has known none more complete and running over than that moment in which the bookseller put into my trembling hands that copy of the "Stultitiæ Laus" of Erasmus, which had belonged to Robert Burton—the author, of course, of "The Anatomy of Melancholy"—and which bore his autograph on its title-page in quaint, scholarly writing—"Robertus Burton". The margins too were rich with the annotations of that fantastic scholar and humorist. The book was a delight in itself, being a fine specimen of early printing from the press of Erasmus's special printer and familiar, Frober—or Joannes Froberius, as he Latinized himself, after the charming manner of the time. Its binding also was a separate rapture—wooden boards covered with leather, stamped with the signs of the zodiac—beautiful old

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leather, richly embrowned with the passage of time, and the handling of eager scholars dead and gone. "The muses love the morning", writes Erasmus in one of his letters; and for many years, as I would daily rest my eyes on the ribbed back of that little russet quarto, it never failed to evoke for me the thrill of that early morning hour when it so wonderfully became mine. As I think of it today—and I can hardly bear to think of it—and wonder onto what shelves the winds that carried it away from mine have drifted it, I realize even more than I could then how actually part of my life, flesh of my flesh, that and other such books I have loved and lost at one time, were. Their loss was nothing short of being a form of death, a bereavement of which the ache still lives in the fibres of one's spirit. The statement may sound exaggerated, and such a manner of feeling toward mere books seem affected and irrational; but other bereaved bookmen for whom alone I am writing will not, I am sure, think that way. For they will have experienced the literal poignant truth of Wordsworth's statement:

> . . . . books, we know,
> Are a substantial world, both pure and good.
> Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
> Our pastime and our happiness will grow.

And Wordsworth, I believe, was speaking merely as a reader, one who loves books merely for the wisdom or the beauty of their printed words. He was not, I think, a book-lover in that further romantic, physical sense of which I have been speaking—like his friends Lamb and Southey. He could not have understood that form of the bookish passion which, like all other passions, often centers itself about comparatively worthless objects, valuing them for characteristics almost entirely apart from literature: their mere rarity, for example. Readers of such high priests of the cult as Thomas Frognall Dibdin or John Hill Burton—or their latest lineal descendant, A. Edward Newton—will know that the fact, say, of there being only two known copies of an utterly valueless book in existence is sufficient to make something like a raving maniac of the man who possesses one and cannot be at peace till he also possesses the other, though he may have to burn down houses and even commit murder to compass it.

Doubtless such extreme cases are uncommon, but the annals of the auction room are rich in stories scarcely less eccentric. However, the passion is, of course, best understood and justified when its object is some book that combines classical literary excellence with rarity of occurrence: such a book, for instance, as Sir Thomas Browne's famous treatise on "Urn Burial"—"Hydriotaphia"—the book in which "the iniquity of Oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy". That and the other purple patches are, of course, available to all in twenty-five cent editions; but think of reading that imperial prose as it first came from the press, in the type, on the paper, where its first reader's eyes first found it! Is that nothing to you, all ye that pass by? As for me, my home seemed wonderful for many years because it housed that very book, because it was mine to take down from the shelves at any moment; and it seems all the more wonderful to me today, when it too has gone down the wind, that that marvel actually became mine for—half-a-crown!

Is there any such luck nowadays? I fear not. During the last twenty years bookmen have talked too much, worn their hearts too much on their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sleeves; and, consequently, the booksellers have become learned in their desires, and prices have accordingly gone up—soared indeed to heights inaccessible save to millionaires:

On rich men's shelves they take their ease,
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.

I never possessed either an Aldine or a Bodoni, but there was once an Elzevir that was as the apple of my eye. I loved it for two reasons. For itself, and because a copy identical with mine, one of the same year and issue, had been celebrated, I should like to say, immortalized, by a writer for whom in those days I had an immense enthusiasm, and for whom I retain an affectionate admiration—Oliver Wendell Holmes. I hope that the ingenious and companionable doctor continues to be read as he deserves to be. When I read "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table", he was at the height of a popularity which did even more honor to the reading public than to himself; and it seemed to make for me a special bond between me and my far-off famous hero when one day I discovered with delight that he and I both rejoiced in a copy of the "Colloquies" of Erasmus, printed by the Brothers Elzevir at Amsterdam, in 1650. Dr. Holmes, need I say, was a bookman *pur sang*, and I will here indulge myself in recalling the passage in which he tells of his treasure:

[Look at the precious little black, ribbed-backed, clean-typed, vellum-papered 32mo. "DESIDERII ERASMI COLLOQUIA. Amstelodami. Typis Ludovici Elzevirii 1650." Various names written on title-page. Most conspicuous this: Gul. Cookeson; E. Coll. Omn. Anim. 1725. Oxon.—O William Cookeson, of All-Souls College, Oxford—then writing as I now write,—now in the dust, where I shall lie,—is this line all that remains to thee of earthly remembrance? Thy name is at least once more spoken by living men;—is it a pleasure to thee? Thou shalt share with me my little draught of immortality,—its week, its month, its year—whatever it may be,—and then we will go together into the solemn archives of Oblivion's Uncatalogued Library!]

I had come upon my own copy in a "two-penny box"—no less—some months before I read this passage, and it was with no little excitement that I hurried to the shelf where I kept "the dear and the dumpy twelves", to see if by any chance mine was of the same date as "The Autocrat's". Sure enough it was, and in my exaltation at the discovery I perpetrated some doggerel which, with youthful temerity, I mailed across the seas to Boston, Massachusetts, U. S. A. As I have since realized what a burden of admiring mail must have come to the fashionable little doctor each morning, it has seemed the more surprising to me that he should have retained sufficient freshness of sympathy, not to speak of the unselfish sacrifice of his valuable time, promptly to respond to my boyish lucubration with a six-page letter, which read like an extra page or two of his books, gossiping away to me with his evergreen enthusiasm, and in a vein of very flattering book-brotherly confidence, of "my literary 'harem', my *parc aux cerfs*", which included, he said, a modest example or two of "incunabula"—those "cradle books" of the first printers, at which the mouths of your tome collectors do most water.

"Incunabula" and "black letter"—how those words still thrill me, as occasionally I come upon them in second-hand catalogues, though even in catalogues they grow rarer every day. They would seem to be nearly all bought up and chained to rich men's shelves—as in the famous "chained library" of illuminated manuscripts at Hereford Cathedral—though the chains are of gold instead of rusty iron. "Illuminated manuscripts"!—there again is one of those magical

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formulæ of bibliomania which steal away the reason, make a man ready to rob his employer, starve his household, let his wife go without a dress to her back, and his babes, like the ravens, cry aloud for food. Dear reader, were you ever caught in the toils of an illuminated "Book of Hours", drugged by its beauty, ensorcelled beyond "the uses of the world", lost to every duty, blind and deaf to your creditors, transported beyond time and space, drunk as with poppy or mandragora, voluptuous, prodigal, and preposterously enthroned? If so, you will know that these words are weak to describe your state of besotted beatitude; and, having once won and worn such a treasure, to what desolation shall I compare your condition when you lost it! The plight of outcast kings, the slow agony of damned spirits stretched forever on burning marl, the black despair of misers robbed of their gold, the melancholy, wind-swept, ruinous hearts of broken lovers: what is their loss compared with yours? It were as vain, as it were cruel, to put such loss in words. So I say no more—only wring your hand, and, with averted face, pass on. . .

Let us return to our Elzevirs. They are still, I believe, within our reach, and I may even hope some day to hold my little Elzevir "Colloquia"—"D. Erasmi Rotersdami"—in my hands once more; for, with a few exceptions —the "Virgil", for instance—Elzevirs have not brought high prices. Yet of all miniature books they are perhaps the most satisfactory. They are not *too* small, like those exquisite gem-like "Pickerings" of later time; and I wish that some printer and publisher might be found sufficiently friendly to the humble scholar to imitate them at the present time, and give us editions of English classics, printed and bound—in that unadorned, enduring vellum—exactly as they were. They were severe and yet companionable, and had the beauty which always comes of absolute fitness. Our modern attempts in their direction have been either too pretty-pretty or too consciously archaic. A collection of English classics exactly on the Elzevir model would, I am sure, meet with a welcome sufficient to repay and even enrich their publisher. *Verbum sapienti.*

The fact that no little of my pride and pleasure in my Elzevir Erasmus came of my association of it with Oliver Wendell Holmes—that is with a writer under whose influence I was just *then*—leads me to remark that a good deal of imitation enters into book-collecting. We are apt, particularly at first, until we have found ourselves and our real tastes, to collect certain books because other great collectors have collected them. Nor is this a matter to be regretted or to be ashamed of, particularly if the collector happens to be Charles Lamb. The enthusiasms of "Elia" indeed have been a great service to literature. Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy"—though it had been a favorite book of Dr. Johnson's before him—has come into its own chiefly on the sponsorship of Lamb; and I confess that I had treasured and "fondled", if I had not exactly "kissed", my own folio "Anatomy"—a particularly "desirable copy"—long before I had taken any real pleasure in reading it, solely because Lamb had taught me to do so. It was the same with my "Beaumont and Fletcher". Ah! what a superb folio that was! Lamb's own copy, that which he "dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden", can hardly have surpassed it, in height and girth. It was heavy enough to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have floored a giant, and how its old polished leather, with its stalwart ribs, used to gleam out from my shelves in the evening lamplight, buttressed on one side by the two almost equally majestic tomes of Camden's "Britannia", and on the other by a folio "Spenser" with silver clasps, and a delectable Sidney's "Arcadia".

Certainly the worshipping imitation which introduced one to the society of such "Worthies"—not forgetting Fuller himself—is to be commended, and in its turn may be recommended for imitation. But a less admirable form of imitation prevails at present, too often, it is to be feared, commercial in its impulse. There has, indeed, of late years, sprung up a class of mercenary collectors who are in danger of bringing discredit upon the true brethren. These men, who are merely tradesmen in disguise, make collections of the first editions of certain living authors, and, appealing to their vanity with false representations of admiration, inveigle them into good-naturedly "inscribing" their books—the books being "shipped" with elaborate prepaid wrappings for their return. The innocent authors fondly imagine that they are thus contributing to some "bookman's paradise", merely making that grateful return for enthusiasm which all but the most arrogant, great or little-great, are always glad to make. It is only later on that they discover, from the reports of an auction, or the columns of a catalogue, the rather stultifying imposition to which they have been subjected. After all, it was not some devoted disciple they had taken pleasure in making happy, but a shrewd speculator in first editions whom they had enriched—at the expense of eventually cheapening their own value. They may, however, find this satisfaction in the experience: that the fact of a writer's being "collected", with whatever purpose, is one of the surest testimonies to his literary quality. Collectors, even of the baser sort, have a curiously reliable *flair* for what is likely to last in contemporary literature, irrespective of the popularity or neglect of its author. You never find them collecting "best sellers"—with the one exception, I think, of Mr. Kipling.

Izaak Walton is another writer, dear to collectors, who owes much to Charles Lamb: "There loitered the Compleat Angler; quiet as in life, by some stream side". And here I would beg leave to tell the reader what seems to me a pretty story, the reminiscence of an "adventure among masterpieces" which has a touch of the picaresque. It affords too an authentic and reliable illustration of the fact that, as I said earlier, men have loved books with a love passing the love of women; a fact the more remarkable in the present connection, because the surprising thing happened at that period of life when, of all periods, it would seem least reasonable to waste one's Christian kisses on folios, with such very different opportunities at hand.

In the countryside, a few miles out from the home of my boyhood, there was an ancient manor-house surrounded by a great walled park of rolling meadow and woodland. Near the gates stood a beautiful old church, rich in inscribed "brasses", and the tombs of knights and their ladies recumbent in alabaster; filled with that lovely hush and tender stained-glass twilight that dwells only in such country sanctuaries, the stir of leaves without, and the twitter of birds the only sounds delicately blending with the silence. There often on summer

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

afternoons I would bicycle out on pilgrimage, to make "rubbings" of the epitaphs engraved on the ancient brasses, being then of an antiquarian turn of mind. But there too, one particular afternoon, I made the discovery of another object of pilgrimage with no antiquarian associations—the same, indeed, being a beautiful young woman who had come there to pray. I could not offer her holy water as she passed out, as holy water was not in use in the Anglican church of those days; but I found another way of making her acquaintance, and, thereafter, was to be found less often at the parish church and more frequently in the orchard of the pretty old house where she lived with a widowed father—a simple old countryman who was factor or steward of the great estate to which church and manor-house and park belonged. Later on when I had become somewhat of a familiar visitor in the household—she and I having sat late over our tea together in the rose-hung garden, in a twilight silence which, if I remember right, I was pondering how to break with a somewhat serious statement—my thoughts were suddenly and even violently diverted in another very different direction by her remarking that there was a garret in the house—she wondered why she hadn't told me before—filled with old books. . . .

"Old books!" I exclaimed, immediately alert, and swept far away indeed from my previous preoccupation. "Where are they? I must see them at once!" And to think she had never told me before!

Yes, but they were all covered with cobwebs, and the place was full of rats and mice and bats and owls. They were lying in heaps, an inch deep in dust and dirt. They had been there for years, apparently long before her father's time. He had no idea as to how they had come there; and indeed the old man was not a reader and cared nothing about them, and so on.

I am mistaken in my reader if he needs any account of my feelings on hearing all this, and I am sure he will not need to be told in how short a space of time my fair companion—as they say in old novels—and I had climbed up into that garret, which proved accessible only by a ladder and a trap-door. We had taken with us a lighted lamp and a kitchen chair, on which, having tucked up her pretty print frock around her to escape the quite indescribable griminess of the place, that fair companion seated herself lamp in hand, while I, with rolled-up shirt sleeves, went to work upon all that buried treasure. No doubt she made a pretty picture as she sat there, but I confess that my eyes had quite ungratefully forgotten her. Yes! that love was upon me—*super amorem mulierum;* and that tag of Latin comes naturally with the memory of that incredibly glorious occasion; for the first volume that I fished out of that limbo of outcast learning was a magnificent copy of the Vulgate, the fly-leaves and margins of which were covered with the exquisite writing of some long-dead scholar. But at once what a piteous and exhilarating sight that garret presented! Never surely has a noble collection of books been so despitefully used. In mounds, like heaps of shot rubbish, lay tossed, with cynical indignity, folios and quartos stoutly bound in fine old leather, and rich "with tarnished gold", editions of the classics in noble type on superb paper, garnished with copper plates still fresh and crisp; Tonsons and Baskervilles, and masterpieces of continental presses, old

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

county histories, and mastodons of divinity. A fine armorial bookplate graced most of the volumes—too many of which alas! were half-eaten away by rats, many others drilled with bookworms, and others falling away into powder's flakes at the touch, like mummied Pharaohs. Over all the webs of countless generations of spiders hung like black wings; and, as I overturned pile after pile I came upon several mouse nests, most delicately made of tiny nibblings of beautiful Greek and Latin texts. It was a sight at once to break the heart and to set it beating high with fearful hope—for what delicious treasure might not lie hidden in these burial mounds where so many scholars lay in inglorious sleep! Anything was possible. It was in forgotten corners such as this that Caxton's had been unearthed. Was it not just the place —what a thought!—for a First Folio? And then, as I scanned the title-page of a thickset calf-skin octavo I had just picked up, I let out a great cry.

"Found something good?" asked my pretty lamp-bearer.

THE SUNNY SIDE OF GRUB STREET

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

I OFTEN wonder how many present-day writers keep diaries. I wish THE BOOKMAN would conduct a questionnaire on the subject. I have a suspicion that Charley Towne keeps one—probably a grim, tragic parchment wherein that waggish soul sets down its secret musings. I dare say Louis Untermeyer has one (morocco, tooled and goffered, with gilt edges), and looks over its nipping paragraphs now and then with a certain relish. It undoubtedly has a large portmanteau pocket with it, to contain clippings of Mr. Untermeyer's letters to the papers taking issue with the reviews of his books. There is no way for the reviewer to escape that back-fire. I knew one critic who was determined to review one of Louis's books in such a way that the author would have no excuse for writing to the "Times" about it. He was overwhelmingly complimentary. But along came the usual letter by return of post. Mr. Untermeyer asked for enough space to "diverge from the critique at one point". He said the review was too fulsome.

I wish Don Marquis kept a diary, but I am quite sure he doesn't. Don is too—well, I was going to say he is too—but after all he has a perfect right to be that way.

It's rather an important thing. Everyone knows the fascination exerted by personal details of authors' lives. Everyone has hustled to the Café de la Source in Paris because R. L. S. once frequented it, or to Allaire's in New York because O. Henry wrote it up in one of his tales, and that sort of thing. People like to know all the minutiæ concerning their favorite author. It is not sufficient to know, let us say, that Murray Hill or someone of that sort, once belonged to the Porrier's Corner Club. One wants to know where the Porrier's Corner Club was, and who were the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

members, and how he got there, and what he got there, and so forth. One wants to know where Murray Hill (I take his name only as a symbol) buys his cigars, and where he eats lunch, and what he eats, whether pigeon potpie with iced tea or hamburg steak and "coffee with plenty". It is all these intimate details that the public has thirst for.

Now the point I want to make is this. Here, all around us, is fine doings (as Murray Hill would put it), the jolliest literary hullabaloo going. Some of the writers round about—Arthur Guiterman or Tom Masson or Witter Bynner or Tom Daly, or some of these chaps now sitting down to combination-plate luncheons and getting off all manner of merry quips and confidential matters—some of these chaps may be famous some day (posterity is so undiscriminating) and all that savory personal stuff will have evaporated from our memories. The world of bookmen is in great need of a new crop of intimists, or whatever you call them. Barbellion chaps. Henry Ryecrofts. We need a chiel taking notes somewhere.

Now if you really jot down the merry gossip, and make bright little pen portraits, and tell just what happens, it will not only afford you a deal of discreet amusement, but the diary you keep will reciprocate. In your older years it will keep you. "Harper's Magazine" will undoubtedly want to publish it, forty years from now. If that is too late to keep you, it will help to keep your descendants. So I wish some of the authors would confess and let us know which of them are doing it. It would be jolly to know to whom we might confide the genial little items of what-not and don't-let-this-go-farther that come the rounds. The inside story of the literature of any epoch is best told in the diaries. I'll bet Brander Matthews kept one, and James Huneker. It's a pity Professor Matthews's was a bit tedious. Crabb Robinson was the man for my money.

The diarists I would choose for the present generation on Grub Street would be Heywood Broun, Franklin Adams, Bob Holliday, William McFee, and maybe Ben De Casseres (if he would promise not to mention Don Marquis and Walt Whitman more than once per page). McFee might be let off the job by reason of his ambrosial letters. But it just occurs to me that of course one must not know who is keeping the diary. If it were known, he would be deluged with letters from people wanting to get their names into it. And the really worthwhile folks would be on their guard.

But if all the writers wait until they are eighty years old and can write their memoirs with the beautifully gnarled and chalky old hands Joyce Kilmer loved to contemplate, they will have forgotten the comical pith of a lot of it. If you want to reproduce the colors and collisions along the sunny side of Grub Street, you've got to jot down your data before they fade. I wish I had time to be diarist of such matters. How candid I'd be! I'd put down all about the two young novelists who used to meet every day in City Hall Park to compare notes while they were hunting for jobs, and make wagers as to whose pair of trousers would last longer. (Quite a desirable essay could be written, by the way, on the influence of trousers on the fortunes of Grub Street, with the three stages of the Grub Street trouser, viz.: 1, baggy; 2, shiny; 3, trousers that must not be stooped in on any account.) There is an uproarious tale about a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pair of trousers and a very well-known writer and a lecture at Vassar College, but these things have to be reserved for posterity, the legatee of all really amusing matters.

But then there are other topics, too, such as the question whether Ibáñez always wears a polo shirt, as the photos lead one to believe. The secret Philip Gibbs told me about the kind of typewriter he used on the western front. I would be enormously candid (if I were a diarist). I'd put down that I never can remember whether Vida Scudder is a man or a woman. I'd tell what A. Edward Newton said when he came rushing into the office to show me the Severn death-bed portrait of Keats, which he had just bought from Rosenbach. I'd tell the story of the unpublished letter of R. L. S. which a young man sold to buy a wedding present, which has since vanished (the R. L. S. letter). I'd tell the amazing story of how a piece of Walt Whitman manuscript was lost in Philadelphia on the memorable night of June 30, 1919. I'd tell just how Vachel Lindsay behaves when he's off duty. I'd even forsake everything to travel over to England with Vachel on his forthcoming lecture tour, as I'm convinced that England's comments on Vachel will be worth listening to.

The ideal man to keep the sort of diary I have in mind would be Hilaire Belloc. It was an ancestor of Mr. Belloc, Dr. Joseph Priestley (who died in Pennsylvania, by the way), who discovered oxygen; and it is Mr. Belloc himself who has discovered how to put oxygen into the modern English essay. The gift, together with his love of good eating, probably came to him from his mother, Bessie Rayner Parkes, who once partook of Samuel Rogers's famous literary breakfasts. And this brings us back to our old friend Crabb Robinson, another of the Rogers breakfast clan. Robinson is never wildly exciting, but he gives a perfect panorama of his day. It is not often that one finds a man who associated with such figures as Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, and Lamb. He had the true gift for diarizing. What could be better, for instance, than this little miniature picture of the rise and fall of teetotalism in one well-loved person?—

> Mary Lamb, I am glad to say, is just now very comfortable. She has put herself under Doctor Tuthill, who has prescribed water. Charles, in consequence, resolved to accommodate himself to her, and since Lord-Mayor's day has abstained from all other liquor, as well as from smoking. We shall all rejoice if this experiment succeeds. . . . His change of habit, though it, on the whole, improves his health, yet when he is low-spirited, leaves him without a remedy or relief.
>
> —Letter of Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Wordsworth, December 23, 1810.
>
> * * *
>
> Spent part of the evening with Charles Lamb (unwell) and his sister.
>
> —Robinson's Diary, January 8, 1811.
>
> * * *
>
> Late in the evening Lamb called, to sit with me while he smoked his pipe.
>
> —Robinson's Diary, December 20, 1814.
>
> * * *
>
> Lamb was in a happy frame, and I can still recall to my mind the look and tone with which he addressed Moore, when he could not articulate very distinctly: "Mister Moore, will you drink a glass of wine with me?"—suiting the action to the word, and hobnobbing.
>
> —Robinson's Diary, April 4, 1823.

Now that, I maintain, is just the kind of stuff we need in a diary of today. How fascinating that old book Peyrat's "Pastors of the Desert" became when we learned that R. L. S. had a copy of the second volume of it in his sleeping sack when he camped out with Modestine. Even so it may be a matter of delicious interest to our grandsons to know what book Joe Hergesheimer was reading when he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came in town on the local from West Chester recently, and who taught him to shoot craps. It is interesting to know what Will and Stephen Benét (those skiey fraternals) eat when they visit a Hartford Lunch; to know whether Gilbert Chesterton is really fond of dogs (as "The Flying Inn" implies, if you remember Quoodle), and whether Edwin Meade Robinson and Edwin Arlington Robinson, *arcades ambo,* ever write to each other. It would be interesting—indeed it would be highly entertaining—to compile a list of the free meals Vachel Lindsay has received, and to ascertain the number of times Harry Kemp has been "discovered". It would be interesting to know how many people shudder with faint nausea (as I do) when they pick up a Dowson playlet and find it beginning with a list of characters including "A Moon Maiden" and "Pierrot", scene set in "a glade in the Parc du Petit Trianon—a statue of Cupid—Pierrot enters with his hands full of lilies". It would be interesting to resume the number of brazen imitations of McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" —here is the most striking, put out on a highly illuminated card by a New York publishing firm:

Rest in peace, ye Flanders's dead,
The poppies still blow overhead,
  The larks ye heard, still singing fly.
  They sing of the cause which made thee die.

And they are heard far down below,
Our fight is ended with the foe.
  The fight for right, which ye begun
  And which ye died for, we have won.
    Rest in peace.

The man who wrote that ought to be the first man mobilized for the next war.

All such matters, with a plentiful bastinado for stupidity and swank, are the privilege of the diarist. He may indulge himself in the delightful luxury of making post-mortem enemies. He may wonder what the average reviewer thinks he means by always referring to single publishers in the plural. A note which we often see in the papers runs like this: "Soon to be issued by the Dorans (or Knopfs or Huebsches)", etc., etc. This is an echo of the old custom when there really were two or more Harpers. But as long as there is only one Doran, one Huebsch, one Knopf, it is simply idiotic.

Well, as we go sauntering along the sunny side of Grub Street, meditating an essay on the Mustache in Literature (we have shaved off our own since that man Murray Hill referred to it in the public prints as "a young hay-wagon"), we are wondering whether any of the writing men are keeping the kind of diary we should like our son to read, say in 1950. Perhaps Miss Daisy Ashford is keeping one. She has the seeing eye. Alas that Miss Daisy at nine years was a *puella unius libri.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHAT'S WHAT AMONG THE FALL BOOKS

BY GRANT M. OVERTON
Literary Editor of the New York "Sun"

I

SOME time between the day you get this number of THE BOOKMAN and next Christmas, as the almanacs say, expect the Great American Novel. It was to have been ready last spring, but the publishers held it back, fearing lest a world convalescent from war books might not be able to stand the meat of strong men and fair women. So they planned to bring it out in the fall.

Then when books, especially stories, began selling like oil stock in the first half of 1919, the publishers of the G. A. N. made moaning noises. Would they be too late, after all?

But fiction continued to be eaten alive. They took heart of hope and ordered an extra 100,000 jackets in five colors. . . . And, believe it or not, they're going to need every blessed one to wrap their Baby Bunting in.

For this is a fiction year. And last spring, wonderful as it was, isn't a patch on what we'll see this autumn.

There has just been placed on sale throughout the country a novel which, it is reasonably expected, 1,000,000 persons will buy within the twelvemonth. If books came steaming from the griddles of all the Childs restaurants, flip-flop into the hands of hungry crowds pressing against the front windows, and if all the pancake artists from Boston to San Francisco were kept at work in three shifts, "The Re-Creation of Brian Kent" could not be supplied fast enough to the readers of Harold Bell Wright. Why is the picturesque always impracticable?

Sometimes the impracticable pays. If there is one thing certain, it is that American publishers are coming more and more to believe so! After the spectacle of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" and "The Education of Henry Adams" topping lists of best sellers, a publisher may well be prepared to believe anything.

Every American house with a fairly long list of new titles has had surprises in the past year and mostly pleasant surprises, at that.

Ask Doubleday, Page and Company and they will tell you that "The Arrow of Gold" by Joseph Conrad, as subtle a romance as his intricate novel "Chance", has sold in multiples of his earlier books, some of them much less "orchestrated", as Mr. Huneker would say.

Ask E. P. Dutton and Company about the reception of the limited edition of the books of Leonard Merrick, proclaimed as "the novelists' novelist" and presumably somewhat above the heads of the great army of fiction readers. They will tell you that the limited edition has had to be followed by an unlimited one.

Ask Charles Scribner's Sons if a first novel of unusual sparkle by an unknown can make its way and let them give you the facts regarding the marked success of "Simple Souls" by John Hastings Turner. Booksellers have not recovered from their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

astonishment at the sales of Robert Cortes Holliday's "Walking-Stick Papers", a collection of mere essays, but there is hope they will do so in time to anticipate the demand for his two new fall books, "Broome Street Straws" and "Peeps at People". These twins are to make their first appearance in the world on the same day, one in the morning and the other shortly after luncheon.

What have been, on their faces, hazardous experiments have paid and paid richly this last year. Take "Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters". Though published in two volumes, at five dollars, it has sold ten times as well as the average successful book of verse—for the poems are naturally the flower of the work. Take "The Great Hunger", by the Norwegian novelist, Johan Bojer. The man is a consummate artist but his name was utterly unknown in this country. Moreover, despite the loveliness of the pages in which he pictures the boy and girl, Peer and Louise, Bojer's tale harrows the soul. But fellow craftsmen as far apart as John Galsworthy, Joseph Hergesheimer and Gene Stratton-Porter acclaimed the book and the public took a half-dozen editions. The result is the promise of another Bojer novel, "The Face of the World", the most popular of his books in his own country.

Risks? American publishers are in the state of mind where, did they seek insurance, Lloyds would go out of business. It is common knowledge that $65,000 was asked for "Ludendorff's Own Story" of how Germany was out-manœuvred. An American publishing house will bring it out this fall. Another publisher announces a book by "the worst man in the world", and this is the personal story of Admiral von Tirpitz, for which also a staggering sum was asked when the manuscript was offered here.

No risk, no gain. But things that used to be looked upon as more or less frankly a gamble are so no longer. There is no hazard of fortunes, new or old, in printing a first edition of 25,000 copies of a striking book on spiritualism. You can sell them! No risk attaches to the acceptance, for immediate publication, of a good manuscript on the order of "Power of Will". In the parlance of the oil fields, it's a gusher.

Publishers are the everlasting prospectors and they are going to make some rich strikes this autumn. The most numerous, as always, will be in the field of fiction. Let us look it over.

II

If we try to take into account all the fiction titles the publishers announce, we won't be able to see the forest for the trees. And hang the trees, the rugged oaks and the noble cedars! What we are after is the *feel* of the fall season.

Nothing gives it better than the appearance of two new publishers. Among the half-dozen books announced by the James A. McCann Company, New York, is "Saul", a novel by Corinne Lowe, spoken of with enthusiastic respect last spring by a woman novelist and editor who had read it in manuscript. It is the story of a Jewish boy reared in a New York tenement who, by his wonderful gift of harmonizing colors and creating beautiful garments, became rich and of great repute. This publisher has also a tale of intrigue by Achmed Abdullah, a wonder in telling such tales.

Blasco Ibáñez's story of German submarines in the Mediterranean,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Mare Nostrum" (Our Sea), has just been brought out by E. P. Dutton and Company. This is the great Spaniard's first novel written since "The Four Horsemen", but the publication of his earlier novels, a feature of last spring, will be continued. The Duttons also have "Light" (in the French, "Clarté"), by Barbusse, who wrote "Under Fire"; a novel of London newspaper life, by Philip Gibbs, and a western story by Dane Coolidge. More of Leonard Merrick's novels are to be brought out from month to month.

In the size of their lists of books for the general reader the Duttons and George H. Doran Company have for some time stood foremost in this country. The Doran list is extraordinarily rich in fiction by established authors. The "slant" can be got from these new books by the young English novelists—Stephen McKenna's "Sonia Married", which carries on the tale of his striking "Sonia" after the heroine's marriage to David O'Rane, blinded in battle; Gilbert Cannan's "Pink Roses" and his "Mummery"; Sheila Kaye-Smith's "The Four Roads"; W. Somerset Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpence"; J. Walter Byrd's "The Born Fool"; and Hugh Walpole's charming story of a little boy, "Jeremy". Daisy Ashford's "The Young Visiters", a novel by a nine-year-old, is in a class by itself.

Doubtless you never heard of Henry Justin Smith. He is news editor of the Chicago "Daily News". Doubleday, Page and Company are bringing out his first novel, "The Other Side of the Wall". Because they believe that Henry Justin Smith is the biggest kind of a discovery they speak with particular restraint, saying merely: "A novel of American life. The reader will be reminded of Frank Norris." Tons of adjectives could not suggest so much. This house has new novels by Tarkington, Kathleen Norris, Ellen Glasgow and Louis Joseph Vance. Miss Glasgow's book, her first in three years, will for that reason attract especial attention.

A mystery story rather in the Zenda manner, and by Sir Anthony Hope, is promised by D. Appleton and Company. It is called "The Secret of the Tower". They have also "The Mystery at the Blue Villa", by that superb craftsman, Melville Davisson Post, a new story by Agnes and Egerton Castle, a new Robert W. Chambers.

Charles Scribner's Sons will offer Gouverneur Morris's "The Wild Goose" and John Hastings Turner's second novel, "A Place in the World", important because of the quality of his "Simple Souls". It is fine to have their assurance of short stories by W. W. Jacobs.

Houghton Mifflin Company have a book by Kate Douglas Wiggin, breaking a long silence, and "Short Stories", by Eleanor H. Porter. Clara Louise Burnham is ready with "In Apple Blossom Time". Roy Norton's novel, "Drowned Gold", takes the war into the South Seas.

After at least eighteen months' delay, Henry Holt and Company hope to bring out William De Morgan's posthumous novel, "The Old Madhouse". A chronicle of the things that have happened to this manuscript would astonish the large numbers of people who blandly suppose that a book is written, accepted and published. De Morgan had not quite reached the end but had told it to Mrs. De Morgan. And it now appears that "The Old Madhouse" was not the author's last book, after all, for there

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is talk of another with the title "The Old Man's Youth and the Young Man's Old Age". Expect it in 1925. Perhaps Romain Rolland's new book, "Colas Breugnon", the story of a mediæval lover, sculptor, fighter, and wag, joins on with the Bojer and Blasco Ibáñez books as another evidence of the extent to which American publishers are taking European fiction, in calm confidence that an American audience exists for it.

Well, a little reflection will show, we think, that this is not quite the situation, though the promise of Georges Clemenceau's "The Strongest" might seem to affirm it. What has happened is extraordinarily interesting and presumably of significance. What *has* happened, then?

III

Simply this: a best-seller public has been found for novels in which the æsthetic or artistic quality is predominant. This public has been created, exists as an integral thing for the first time and will hereafter be a permanent factor in book publishing. It will always have to be reckoned with.

At its smallest, this public numbers 15,000 book buyers. Its largest is not a definite number, since, where a work of fiction possesses something beyond merely beautiful art, this public becomes the nucleus of a public ten times greater. In such a case, the 15,000 introduce the book to the 150,000.

This happened with "The Four Horsemen". It is happening with "The Great Hunger". It happens, every now and then, with an outstanding book by one of the younger English novelists of whom Mr. Doran has corralled so many. The 15,000 can be relied on to take any book, for example, by Compton Mackenzie; if the thing is a "Carnival" they will see that the 150,000, or some part of them, get to know about it.

The 150,000 demand much more than beauty, they demand idea. "The Four Horsemen" and "The Great Hunger" had that. "Java Head" did not. "Mr. Britling" had and "Joan and Peter" had and "The Undying Fire" had; so did "Sonia". Serial publication, which has many important and curious results never adequately studied, could not make the 150,000 accept "Java Head"; and of course with Mr. Galsworthy's "Saint's Progress" serial publication made any further introduction unnecessary.

A perception of this state of affairs is a necessary thread to find one's way through the labyrinth of fall book titles. It is of no importance, of course, in considering the prospect of Margaret Deland's "The Promises of Alice", on the Harper list. Mrs. Deland has left old Chester for the Vermont mountains. Some thousands of her habitual readers will accompany her. Very well; but how about Compton Mackenzie's "Sylvia and Michael"? Is it another "Carnival"? The 15,000 will give verdict shortly. A new Potash and Perlmutter book is important news, as a matter of course; concerning as it does the thousands who have got enjoyment from Montague Glass's matchless partners. But the novel on the Harper list that will command closest attention and excite greatest anxiety is Mary Johnston's "Michael Forth". It should settle definitely whether Miss Johnston is to tread the road lamentably taken in her last book, "Foes".

When you see the announcement of a story by George Barr McCutcheon called "Sherry", perhaps with the additional information that Sherry is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

short for Sheridan Redpath, who wasted a legacy, you can assess the precise news value of the book with not much chance of error. Fifty thousand people will want to know about it. It's the same way with the new Robert Hichens book called "Snake Bite". All you have to do is to recall how many read his "Bella Donna". And as for another Louis Couperus tale, "The Tour", dealing with Roman globe-trotters traveling in Egypt in the time of Tiberius—that's easy, too. But the Bobbs-Merrill Company has a story by Irving Bacheller with the title, "A Man of the Ages", the title deriving from Seward's remark as he stood by Lincoln's deathbed. Mr. Bacheller wrote "Eben Holden" and he wrote "The Light in the Clearing"—and he also wrote various books of no account whatever in the many years between. Well, *what* is the probable news value of "A Man of the Ages"—meaning, how many people, presumably and offhandedly, will want to know particulars about it? It may matter to 15,000 and it may matter equally to 150,000.

You look at the John Lane Company list—H. de Vere Stacpoole, W. J. Dawson, W. J. Locke (short stories), Balkan romance by Demetra Vaka and her husband, Kenneth Brown; "Monsieur Bergeret in Paris" being another volume in an edition of Anatole France. You look at the list, we repeat, and the only thing on it the news value of which you can definitely state is Coningsby Dawson's "The Test of Scarlet". "Carry On" sold in six figures. That's one factor. Not the only one, though, by a long shot. Still, it's the most important.

Here is pressing work for the 15,000. May Sinclair has written and the Macmillan Company are publishing "Mary Olivier: A Life", which runs from two-year-old infancy (1863) to "the freedom, peace and happiness of middle age" at forty-seven, in the year 1910. The story is improbably of interest to the hundred thousand but—that was the case with "The Great Hunger". Again, the same house announces a novel by Alice Brown, who wrote—you may remember it—"The Prisoner". The surface indications are of a book which many more than our 15,000 will thank you for calling to their attention. On the other hand there is, on the face of things, no reason to assign even tentatively high news value to "Legend", by Clemence Dane, or to the new Eden Phillpotts. And what is this? A uniform edition of Jack London with "John Barleycorn" missing! The Century Company and the Macmillan Company are as far as the outsider can go in fixing responsibility.

Responsibility there certainly is for such an omission, but American book publishing has not yet reached the stage of industrial development where the blame for this, or any one of a thousand other deplorabilities, can be placed. Competitive chaos reigns, without any effective cooperation even where the interests of each as well as of all would be promoted by its exercise. As a result only three books were sold in America last spring for every one sold in the spring of 1918. For every three books sold last spring, four will be sold this fall; it should be seven. A book by an established writer of exceptionally wide popularity may, as things stand at present, achieve forty per cent of its possible sale if advertised in the ordinary ways and to the ordinary extent and —here's the core of the matter—merchandised with just the usual distribution.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IV

The title of Cardinal Mercier's book is yet to be chosen. It will, of course, go on the shelf beside Brand Whitlock's "Belgium" and the authoritative books of Jellicoe and French. Marshal Foch defers his narrative. Frederick Palmer has completed his record of the Argonne, "Our Greatest Battle". General Maurice's second book is on the last four months of the war. Father Duffy has written the story of New York's old Sixty-ninth; James Norman Hall has set down the doings of the Lafayette Escadrille; Frank Parker Stockbridge is the author of "Yankee Ingenuity in the War".

There are two autobiographies of the first interest. One, "Marse Henry", is Henry Watterson's recollections; the other is Champ Clark's "A Quarter Century of American Politics". Another effort is announced to supply an adequate biography of Robert E. Lee. The last two volumes (III and IV) of Albert J. Beveridge's life of Chief Justice Marshall are now ready. The prospect of a life of Artemus Ward by Don C. Seitz is inviting.

Mostly casuals, these books. And poetry? The Macmillan Company offers a new narrative poem by John Masefield, Edgar Lee Masters's "Domesday Book", and Amy Lowell's "Pictures of the Floating World". The Masefield title is "Reynard, the Fox; or The Ghost Heath Run". As to other poetry we shall, mainly, have to wait and see.

V

If you had to handle the new books and spot the "likely" ones; if you were, for instance, a literary editor—which, thank God, you are not,—you would put a little check mark in front of a new novel by Georges Duhamel, "The Heart's Domain", remembering his "The New Book of Martyrs" and "Civilization". The latest one by E. Phillips Oppenheim would not stump you. Archibald Marshall's "Sir Harry" would not cost you a sleepless night. The Oppenheim audience and the Marshall audience are certain, though otherwise quite unlike. But here is Mrs. Victor Rickard's "The House of Courage". She has written at least two fine novels and "The House of Courage" may shelter as many readers as "The House of Mirth". William Roscoe Thayer and Lawrence F. Abbott have written about Theodore Roosevelt, while as for "Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children", edited by Joseph Bucklin Bishop—gosh! but they will sell! Turning the page of Small, Maynard and Company's catalogue you say to yourself that you don't know about his "The Secret House" but you do know that his "Tam o' the Scoots" was some of the best fun you had last spring. So it goes.

What you have to keep in mind is the general reading public. For instance, a good many readers not interested in music may be drawn to "A Quaker Singer's Recollections" when told that the book is by David Bispham. Some people regularly spend winter evenings (by warm fires, in comfortable chairs) reading explorers' stories. But others than these have heard of Stefánsson and Shackleton. Let's recruit them for the audiences of "The Friendly Arctic" and "Crossing the South Pole".

In Chicago and elsewhere they read James Branch Cabell. Here he is, with "Jurgen". Tells of a poet-pawnbroker who journeyed "even to the hell of his fathers and the heaven of his grandmother". All the justices of the Supreme Court will require special

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relaxation this winter, having molehills of work before them such as deciding about beer and the riparian rights of bartenders. It is well known, an established fact, that the justices relax over detective stories. Isabel Ostrander has written for them "Ashes to Ashes". For parlor Bolshevists and for the marble-topped table generally there will be "Raymond Robins's Own Story" recorded by William Hard, and Arthur Bullard's "The Russian Pendulum". Vexation! The new Zane Grey novel won't be ready until January! Let's not give any Christmas presents.

Spiritism, spiritualism, borderland studies—whatever the name does not matter. Many thousands will seek them out eagerly. They will buy Conan Doyle's "The Vital Message" as they bought his "The New Revelation". They will denude the shops of Basil King's "The Abolishing of Death"; Hereward Carrington's and Samuel McCombs's and James H. Hyslop's new books will also lure them. As for children, all of an age to accept an animal with one pink and one blue ear should have presented to them Frances Hodgson Burnett's "The Good Wolf". Or a Burgess. Don't say you don't know what a Burgess is. Why, man, it's a standard article, like Jimmy-Pipe Tobacco or Dashboard Overalls. Over a million sold.

Where do we go from here? To "John McCormack: His Own Life-Story" or to Gene Stratton-Porter's "Homing With the Birds" or to Edith Wharton's "In Morocco"? Take your own track; you'll arrive somewhere. Maybe at a Little Theatre all your own, lying flat on your back and reading the play by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson entitled "The Gibson Upright". Maybe you will find yourself, between revulsion and admiration, reading a book by a woman signing herself "Anita Gordon" and telling how, though now "a respected member of society", up to a few years ago she dwelt in "such moral degradation that all hope of a return from a life of prostitution and drunkenness seemed futile".

It is impossible to go wrong in reading. No more possible than it is to go wrong in making acquaintances. Ah, you think that all too possible! In fact, you have made undesirable acquaintances. You dropped them. You can drop the book, too, and it won't come around and ask you to lend it $15 till Saturday night. We are to suppose that after making a number of unpleasant acquaintances you decided that the human race as a whole was very trashy indeed; and you went off and have been living with nature ever since. Or about like that. . . . These people who complain that there are no good books give us, as Tarkington says of Ramsey Milholland, "a definite sickness". Like Ramsey, we go forth, wishing for death.

VI

Unlike all other disordered prospectuses, this one will not conclude with rich promises. What is needed is not a prospectus, however ample or alluring, but examination on the spot. Everybody who reads books should, if it is humanly possible, go to a bookshop and make his selection in the physical presence of the books themselves. Only in those surroundings, we suspect, can the average American come to a comprehension of what American publishers are trying to do.

Apparently they are not all trying to do the same thing.

One publisher is trying, principally, to provide you with entertainment,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very likely of a particular brand, such as detective stories. Another is trying to publish books that will reach a public of James Joyce-like predilections. All the larger houses endeavor to place before you a well-rounded output—some fiction of this stamp, some of that; a book or two of verse, a little biography, a travel book, an historical work, a volume of essays. This is partly the business prudence of not putting all the eggs in a single basket; partly an effort to reach different audiences. When you buy one book in preference to another, you do your bit toward determining the future policy of the publisher, not merely, but the whole trend of American book publishing.

Your verdict is unrecognizable except as massed with others. When, by your purchase, you help make a best seller, you give a definite clue to the publisher. When you join with a minority to buy a certain volume you are no less helpful in an entirely different way. The publisher is encouraged to diversification. To experimentation.

What the publisher has come pretty clearly to realize—and you have brought him to the realization—is this: a vote for a particular best-seller novel is not a vote for another book of the same brand. One year you wanted "Pollyanna". Last year you wanted "The Four Horsemen". Poles apart. Nothing in common? Oh, yes, they had! Each represented a state of mind and each came when you were ripe for it. Of course with the authors you know well it's otherwise, but then—they know *you* well.

We said the publishers apparently were not all trying to do the same thing because, superficially, that is the truth; but underneath all their surface policies they are trying, each and every one of them, for a single object. It is—excuse toplofty language—to enrich your life and make money doing it. Not, really, that your life is worth enriching. The telephone was invented, and so was the dictograph, to enrich it; but with the inventing of them that idea stopped and the idea of making money out of them took full sway and possession. Now the funny thing is, every book of any consequence is a brand new invention. It's not just another telephone or another dictograph. It's "different". All the idealism of the absolutely new invention surrounds it. When it begins to sell, as when the telephone began to spread and the dictograph to dict in a thousand homes, the prospect of actually making money out of the contraption looms up for the first time. If you then feel that sordidness has set in, you had better rush out and buy the first edition of a more recent and as yet untainted volume. Numbered copies are useful in this contingency.

Without jesting, every season beholds books that should gain thousands of readers getting unaccountably overlooked all 'round. Take a story by Edgar Saltus published last spring. The author's earlier books and obscure fame (or famous obscurity) may have had most to do with it; anyway, "The Paliser Case" did not reach half its real audience. The story was nothing, but the telling made it everything. Take this:

> Cassy went by and on, turned a corner, crossed the street, descended into a cave, smiled sweetly at a man who was closing a door and who, seeing that smile, smiled at it, smiled wantonly, held the door open, yet, noting then but an arid blankness where her smile had been, banged the door and shouted fiercely: "Hundred-thirty-seven-street-next".

That would have made O. Henry happy, especially if he had just written it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reader, get on the job this fall, buy, explore, have a good time with the several hundred or thousand new books, tell us what you know and don't let the good things get past you! You don't have to take anything on faith or anybody's say-so; you don't have to know anything about literature; you have only to know what you like—and you have always been famous for knowing that. Remembering that you have a reputation to sustain, go forth boldly.

JANE AUSTEN

BY FRANK SWINNERTON

JANE AUSTEN'S novels are not necessarily greater than some other novels, although I think there are few wiser; they are merely unlike any others. She stands apart, portraying intensively very simple forms of domestic life, which yet, in the later books especially, permit of a highly complicated series of emotional relationships; ironic; full of a judicious sympathy; an artist in a literature sparsely populated by such beings; without a failure even among her unfinished stories. The stories, it is true, seem to drift, and they seem to be about small things. Neither the one nor the other appearance is true. To be as deceptively simple upon the surface as her books are they must have sprung from a nature not merely gifted with imagination, and not merely rich in judgment, though these qualities are essential. It must have been a nature stronger in its power of general conception, or sense of form, than, I should think, that of any previous English novelist. When Henry James defined art as "dignity and memory and measure . . . conscience and proportion and taste, not to mention strong sense too", he might have been praising Jane Austen directly, for these are all characteristics of her work. There seems to me no doubt at all that Jane Austen carried the novel, regarded simply as a form of art, higher than it had ever been carried before in England, and perhaps higher than it has been carried since by any writer other than Mr. Hardy.

But not alone are these novels memorable as works of art, as Henry James defined such things to be. They have other and more endearing characteristics which we should do ill to neglect. They have that beautiful whimsical irony which relates the author to Cervantes and to Shakespeare, and which makes "Don Quixote" and the Shakespearean comedies still so freshly charming—that detached and loving nonsense that gives them intimacy, and allows us to see deeper into the author's heart than any other quality has ever done. Her books, from "Northanger Abbey" to "Persuasion", are full of friends, whom we judge as friends—some of whom, perhaps, as Mrs. Norris, or Mary Musgrove, or Mr. Woodhouse, we are inclined to judge as relatives—and the wiser we grow in the estimation of character the more we find that Jane Austen knew about character, so that she could actually, without caricature, present it as idiosyncrasy. Like her own

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nurse Rooke, "she is a shrewd, intelligent, sensible woman. Hers is a line for seeing human nature"; but she was also like her own charming Elizabeth, who said: "I hope I never ridicule what is wise and good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can."

That laughter is what brings light and beauty into the novels, and what makes them so agreeable at this time. Her books seem as natural as our own happy memories, as dry and convinced as our own private judgments, and as wise as oracles and unpretentious as simplicity itself. They are about people who behave and react and interact normally, and who reach eminently suitable fortunes that seem to us true, by the mere common consistency of their actions. The characters are in life, not controlling or defying it, but, in obedience to their own impulses, forming a part of its general texture. For a novelist to achieve such an effect, assuming, as we are doing, that this form of verisimilitude is the novelist's chief legitimate object, is very remarkable. To give such an impression, while working within a form so exacting as was the one she chose, was for Jane Austen, and for the English novel, so distinguished a performance that the results of it may still be seen in the admiration of those who practise the same craft.

Of all the novels "Northanger Abbey" is the least perfect in construction as in matter. It is the least profound, and although the pictures of life in Bath are admirably painted, it is in most respects the weakest as it is the slightest of all. Most likely its weaknesses are due to its partly satiric conception. Nevertheless it has a peculiar interest for the lover of Jane Austen, even apart from its qualities and defects as a novel, because of its place in the order of her works and its relation to the author's native character. We know that "Pride and Prejudice" preceded "Sense and Sensibility" in manuscript, and we know that "Northanger Abbey", although published posthumously, came third, at the end of Miss Austen's first period. Apparently it was not revised before publication, as were "Pride and Prejudice" and "Sense and Sensibility". It may therefore be said to represent the author of twenty-two more nearly than its predecessors.

If that is indeed the case, the book gives rise to a rather curious suggestion. However observant, and however gifted with that sympathetic power of self-translation to which we give the name "imagination", every novelist is clearly dependent upon self-understanding for the basis of character projection. The novelist of experience may possibly use "self" purely as so much emotional reference; but the beginning novelist almost invariably falls back upon definite self-portraiture. The nature so exuberant as to demand self-expression by way of the novel must, one would think, overrun into some finite mould. So, it has been suggested, Jane Austen's nature overran in "Pride and Prejudice"; and some readers have been a little mystified by the character of Elizabeth's successor, Elinor Dashwood. If one realizes, however, that repetition was out of the question, it may then be allowable to suggest that in a second novel, failing the primary characteristics of her own temperament, Jane Austen would naturally fall back upon its secondary characteristics. From that clear intelligence, with its whimsical high spirits, that made Elizabeth a tease

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the first order, to the clear intelligence with its rather shrewd seriousness, that made Elinor so good a foil to a sensibility disliked and distrusted by Miss Austen herself, is not so far a cry as some would have us believe. Jane had always plenty of sense; she, when Marianne ecstatically asked after the appearance of "dear, dear Norland", could equally well have responded, as Elinor does, "Dear, dear Norland probably looks much as it always does at this time of year—the woods and walls thickly covered with dead leaves. . . . It is not every one who has your passion for dead leaves."

The similar passages of dry rebuttal of oversensitiveness which may be read in all the novels and in the letters would of themselves support our suggestion. "Do not be afraid of my running into any excess", says Elizabeth Bennet, "of my encroaching on your privilege of universal good-will. You need not." Supposing, then, that she had already used her own whimsical freshness earlier in the character of Elizabeth, who is told by Mr. Darcy that he has "had the pleasure of her acquaintance long enough to know that she finds great enjoyment in occasionally professing opinions which in fact are not her own"; and supposing that she had used her own secondary character, of repugnance to sentimentality, in the character of Elinor Dashwood, Miss Austen might well begin a third novel somewhat bereft of her own support. "Northanger Abbey" gives just that air. It begins with a playful sketch of a young girl and a middle-aged woman who has some affinity with Lady Bertram in a later book; but as these persons only exercise her ingenuity, and as Miss Austen is wrestling still with the irresistible high spirits of her early letters and her first novel, she finds it necessary to bestow the high spirits for a time, though not continuously, upon that worthy young man, Mr. Tilney. The nonsense of Mr. Tilney is not really unlike the nonsense of Jane Austen, who writes to her sister in 1799:

> I do not wonder at your wanting to read "First Impressions"* again, so seldom as you have gone through it, and that so long ago. I am much obliged to you for meaning to leave my old petticoat behind you. I have long secretly wished it might be done, but had not the courage to make the request.

Even if it is the case, however, that the author has been compelled by her spirits to impart them to one special individual in the book as a significant portion of his character, we notice in "Northanger Abbey" an increase of that reserve which grew ever deeper until it reached its perfection in the quiet and mature beauty of "Persuasion". That is to say, we find that although she was charmed with Catherine Morland, and relieved at the nonsense of Mr. Tilney (who seems to express several of Miss Austen's own whimsies with all her own readiness), the author is much further back from her sympathetic characters, objective almost to the point of criticism, than she has been in the two earlier books. There her attitude has been, perhaps, in reference to Elizabeth and Elinor, a little protective. It is not unreasonable to suppose that while in Elizabeth Bennet she was very personal indeed, and in Elinor Dashwood she gave expression to her sympathy with the restrained rather than the irrational attitude to events, Miss Austen found other methods necessary here. At first, it is suggested, she tried to cover the lack of a personal representative by direct apostrophe to the reader—as in the well-known passage on the novel,

*"Pride and Prejudice."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which I shall quote later; and then she was forced to make Mr. Tilney a true Austen, in spite of his heredity and his sacred calling. Finally, she fastidiously illustrated the characters of the coquette and the randy vulgarian, satirized at length the enormities of the romantic novel, and allowed her story to droop into the record of a pleasant alliance.

"Northanger Abbey", coming as it does precisely at the break in her two periods of productiveness, marks a turning-point in her method. From that time onward, it seems as though Jane Austen had recovered from the need for personal exemplification which young novelists feel. She is in the last three books—"Mansfield Park", "Emma", and "Persuasion"—much more mature, less lively and effervescently satirical, and very much more analytic. Her remaining novels, in spite of the attempts of sentimental critics to read a personal love story into "Persuasion", are apparently free from self-portraiture. She has contented herself with a godlike detachment, and the result is finer, though less spontaneously attractive. Not one of the later books has the same call upon our affections as "Pride and Prejudice". It can hardly be doubted that this is because it is the most exuberantly personal of all the books. It has youth and good spirits, and a number of very lively portraits; but Jane is all the time giving herself as Elizabeth, and that is why our hearts are won. The other books we appreciate, because they are in general more finely and more intricately rendered; but "Pride and Prejudice" is the one we love.

What "Pride and Prejudice" is to the first trio of novels, "Emma" is to the second. It is the work of a comic genius at its height of lucidity and penetration. It gives the impression of being the most fully peopled of all the books—of a world with a real life, a real social life, of its own; not, as "Mansfield Park" does, of a reservoir into which the stones of the wicked Crawford and the never-to-be-forgotten Mr. Yates are thrown. The closely-woven texture of "Mansfield Park" has its obvious effects; but while the book contains a perfect galaxy of portraits, rendered with beautiful exactitude, its intrigue is less immediately satisfactory than that of any of the other novels. It is not unsatisfactory because it is unconvincing; but because it goes against the grain of the reader's strongest predilections and because the instruments of the catastrophe—Julia Bertram, Maria Rushbrook, old Mr. Yates—are not among the principal characters. The mind unceasingly speculates as to the good effects of marriage with Mr. and Miss Crawford of Fanny and Edmund. The collapse of the Crawford pretensions, and the predestined union of Fanny with her long-loved cousin, displeases us because the Crawfords are the most interesting young people in the book.

It is as though, having been amusedly aware of the shocks that would come to the too-serious cousins in the course of such marriages as open before them, we are suddenly balked and made to admire the union of the good with the good. The union of the good with the good involves a banality. It is a conclusion we do not "like", and yet it is a conclusion which, in spite of our repugnance to it, is artistically right and true. The falseness is our own, in bringing modern irreverence and experimentalism into a period which was not irreverent or experimental. What we regard as a lamentable shutting-down of roman-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tic possibility is in reality an exemplification of manners (in the least superficial sense of that term) as they were at the beginning of last century, and any other conclusion than the one the book enjoys would have been impossible to our author. Nevertheless, "Mansfield Park" is the most sober, and, with "Sense and Sensibility", the least generally attractive of the novels. It is strongest in its satiric portraits —Lady Bertram and Mrs. Norris are unsurpassed—and in its veracity. It is not, in spite of the fragile beauty of Fanny, and the exquisite drawing in those passages which describe the laceration of her heart, the best of the novels so far as emotional interest is concerned.

Nor, perhaps, is "Emma" at the head of Miss Austen's work upon the count of emotional interest. It is by far the most brilliant, the finest exhibition of its author's restrained wit, and the novel containing the most varied portraits, painted with the most difficult and overpowering precision. Whereas we have had in such a book as "Pride and Prejudice" merely natural reactions of character —such as those of Elizabeth upon Darcy, Lady de Bourgh upon Elizabeth, Mrs. Bennet upon Mr. Bennet, and so on, we have in "Emma" reactions that are much more complex. That is one extraordinary quality also in "Mansfield Park" (in, for example, the relations of Fanny with the Crawfords, which are described in a way to make one hold one's breath with delight). In "Emma" it reaches a very high excellence indeed. One remarkable factor in the book's success, considering that there are several distinct "stories", such as those of Harriet and her beaux, Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax, Emma and Mr. Knightley, is the sense of "group emotion" which causes all these stories to dovetail into the life of Highbury. Highbury is the perfect milieu. One catches the air of it so well that when Emma steps to the door of Ford's shop she sees that which brings the place vividly before one's eyes. Says Miss Austen:

> Much could not be hoped from the traffic of even the busiest part of Highbury:—Mr. Perry walking hastily by; Mr. William Cox letting himself in at the office door; Mr. Cole's carriage horses returning from exercise; or a stray letter-boy on an obstinate mule, were the liveliest objects she could presume to expect; and when her eyes fell only on the butcher with his tray, a tidy old woman travelling homewards from shop with her full basket, two curs quarrelling over a dirty bone, and a string of dawdling children round the baker's little bow-window eyeing the gingerbread, she knew she had no reason to complain, and was amused enough; quite enough still to stand at the door. A mind lively and at ease can do with seeing nothing, and can see nothing that does not answer.

In such a scene as this conjures up it is very easy to realize the presence of Mr. Woodhouse and Miss Bates, of the Eltons, Mr. Knightley, the Westons, and those others who go to form the Highbury community. Set thus, they have but to appear, and they will interest us. They do more. They interest us, certainly, and divert us; but the stuff of the book, its texture, and the feeling it gives us of absolute first-hand reality, is due to something besides the finished exemplification of character. It is remarkable how closely all these diverse persons are bound together, how they affect one another, and how the intricate relationships, recoils, and attractions, are all made a part of the web that holds our attention, of the picture that deepens with each page in our consciousness and our memory. Not alone Emma survives, or Miss Bates, or that marvelously contrived doctor—Perry —who never appears but who takes his place in the gallery. It is the com-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

munity, the slow-moving life of Highbury, that we recall. It is not Frank Churchill's failings, nor the secretiveness of Jane Fairfax, but the sense of the way these things strike and affect their associates, that gives this book its never-ending power in our *imagination*. We may look at Miss Bates, and think her a garrulous old fool; but we immediately recall the moment when Emma is rude to her, and then think of the feelings of Miss Bates, of Emma, and of Mr. Knightley upon that occasion—all consequential, all arising out of feelings caused earlier and otherwise in a close web of human sensitiveness. And in recognizing Miss Bates's garrulity we also are made to go deeper, to see below the silliness as Mr. Knightley would have us do, when she says, with the most exquisite naïve simplicity: "It is such a happiness when good people get together—and they always do."

In every way "Emma" is a *tour de force;* in wit, in character, in that sense that everything may happen, and in the wise air of sympathy with those who are true at heart in spite of superficial idiosyncrasies. If we think of Mr. Woodhouse, with his belief in the difference of Hartfield pork from every other pork, his distress in his daughter's marital happiness, his proclamation of the cleverness of his grandchildren, we laugh as mischievously as Miss Austen did; but we also do justice to Emma by indirect knowledge of her relations with him. We should never love and accordingly understand her as we do if we had not learned that she was a considerate hostess to her father's guests. We remember it was Emma's occupation,—

while her father was fondly noticing the beauty of her dress, to make the two ladies all the amends in her power, by helping them to large slices of cake and full glasses of wine, for whatever unwilling self-denial his care of their constitution might have obliged them to practise during the meal. She had provided a plentiful dinner for them; she wished she could know that they had been allowed to eat it.

This knowledge of Emma's loving, amused, not at all unkind sense of her father's character, is really essential to our understanding of the book. It is only one instance, chosen at random, from among the tiny stitches, the fine threads, which go to make the book so delectable a whole.

"Persuasion" is less brilliant. It is quiet, and it is beautiful, the subdued picture of a constant love. What Fanny Price was in her most attractive and moving hours, that is Anne Elliot. Her dignity and her refinement are alike to be felt throughout. If she is the eldest of Jane Austen's heroines, she is the more beautiful for that. The rest of the book—including the masterly mutual-criticism of the two families of Musgroves—is but a background to Anne. The intrigue is inferior, so far as it is concerned with the revelations of Mr. Elliot's character; but the loves and "the whims and inconsistencies" were never more ardently shown. The Elliots in general, the Crofts, and their acquaintance are pictured with an economy and precision far beyond the range of any similar novelist of manners.

We have committed ourselves to the phrase "novelist of manners"; but that phrase must be understood in a very wide sense. Jane Austen was never the mere portrayer of customs, nor the retailer of chatter. She simply set herself to illustrate the diversities of human character as they were known to her. Upon that fabric of common human nature which she shared with the rest of her species

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she raised this highly-simplified and if you like "conventionalized" novel of hers. But she did this deliberately. She was not the naïve child or the observant young woman spinning innocuous tales about her own acquaintance. She was the conscious and the profound artist. To her the novel was as serious a matter as it is to be the modern artist, who is sometimes accused of taking himself and his art with too great a solemnity.

Miss Austen says:

> I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom, so common with novel writers, of degrading, by their contemptuous censure, the very performances to the number of which they are themselves adding: joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. Alas! if the heroine of one novel be not patronized by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard? I cannot approve of it. Let us leave it to the Reviewers to abuse such effusiveness of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the press now groans. Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. From pride, ignorance, or fashion, our foes are almost as many as our readers; and while the abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogized by a thousand pens, there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them. "I am no novel reader; I seldom look into novels; do not imagine that *I* often read novels; it is really very well for a novel." Such is the common cant. "And what are you reading, Miss—?" "Oh! it is only a novel!" replies the young lady; while she lays down her book with affected indifference, or momentary shame. It is only "Cecilia", or "Camilla", or "Belinda"; or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineations of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language.

And this was written in 1798, fifty or sixty years before Thackeray explained to a complacently assenting England that the novel was a sweet, a something for the merest diversion. Surely Jane Austen was the first of the modern English novelists! The work upon which she was engaged was "only some work on which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineations of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world", with precision and an understanding peculiarly Jane Austen's own. The beauty of her work, the fresh, nonsensical wit, the rare detachment, are not indicated clearly enough in this summary of the novelist's character; but as they can now be appreciated by all, perhaps our author had no need to fly this defiance in her book. Two years before it was written she had called her sister "the finest comic writer of the present age"; and as for her own correspondence, she says to Cassandra, "I am very much flattered by your commendation of my last letter, for I write only for fame, and without any view to pecuniary emolument". Her letters, indeed, though they want the art, have much of the delightfulness of what Miss Austen calls "open pleasantry"; and I am sure that lovers of Jane Austen will always continue to read back behind the books the laughing, irrepressible nature which, when Miss Austen's genius and wisdom had informed the novels with character and understanding, made them radiant with inextinguishable and almost inexpressible mirth.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VIEWING AND REVIEWING BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

BY ANNIE CARROLL MOORE

WHEN Ralph Bergengren's "Jane, Joseph and John" came forth from the Atlantic Monthly Press last fall, we said, "Why shouldn't it happen again? Why not another golden age of writing and illustrating children's books at first hand such as Mary Mapes Dodge and Frank R. Stockton inaugurated when they left 'Hearth and Home' and took up their abode at the house of 'St. Nicholas' in 1873?"

We remembered that long before Horace E. Scudder succeeded Thomas Bailey Aldrich as editor of "The Atlantic Monthly" he spent three years in the editing of a children's magazine. ("The Riverside Magazine for Young People", 1867-70.) We recalled his crusade against the school readers of the time, his pioneer work in collecting fables and folk stories, his rewriting of American history, his rare philosophy and understanding of child life revealed in his essays first published in "The Atlantic Monthly" and well known to us as "Childhood in Literature and Art".

And then we began to think about what good friends Mr. Scudder and Mrs. Dodge had been and how many great friendships they had shared with children. Pictures of Mrs. Dodge flitted across our consciousness. We saw her seated at her busy desk writing at top speed those charming letters which brought to the service of "St. Nicholas" the best writers of her time—we saw her holding up authors wherever she met them by her laughing challenge to write something "good enough for children". No author ever seemed to her too distinguished to write for children. "Are you sure you are equal to it?" was her quick reply when Kipling asked if she was not going to ask him to contribute to "St. Nicholas"; and a few weeks later "Rikki-Tikki" and "Toomai of the Elephants" were outlined at Mrs. Dodge's hospitable home. Thus began the "Jungle Books".

All of our impressions of Mr. Scudder and Mrs. Dodge have been taken from their books or their editoral work and from those who knew them best—Ruth McEnery Stuart, Mrs. Scudder, and Mr. Clarke who is the present editor of "St. Nicholas". We have been told that Mr. Scudder often asked Mrs. Dodge to go to the theatre with him on his visits to New York, and we like to think of them seated together at Wallack's or Daly's. "St. Nicholas" was founded on the frank and full recognition of a child's right to a good time—"a child's magazine is its playground" said its editor; and what a spacious playground she made of it!

To both of these editors, the artist, as well as the author, was a contributor; he was expected to illumine the text of the story or poem for the eyes of children and at the same time to preserve the integrity of his drawing and his full conception of the subject. Reproductions of famous paintings or engravings were chosen by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them because of their appeal to children. Had the "art wave" which swept the public schools in the late 'nineties been founded on any such sound psychology and understanding of children's interests in pictures, we should not now be lagging so far behind England, France, and Scandinavia in our picture books. Why should not our art schools be distinguished for their opportunities to create and originate for the children of this country and Europe in terms of our contemporary life? For years we have longed for picture books in color showing the life of great cities and typical country scenes in America, South America, and Europe—not lithographs, not geographical readers, not peeps at anything, but pictures that make you want to go there. Photographs do not and cannot supply the illumination of the artist.

Some of the French and Scandinavian picture books best typify the kind of thing we have in mind. To give their own life and color to New York, New Orleans, St. Augustine, parts of New England and California would require the service of artists of a high order, and we are familiar with many of the difficulties in color printing. But—we argued—if the Atlantic Monthly Press dares put out in wartime a big flat book with wide margins and with Maurice Day's pictures of children who make very good impressions of those very real children, "Jane, Joseph and John"—even if they do leave something to be desired in action,—why shouldn't the Atlantic Monthly Press dare some more? And so—very timidly over a Boston telephone—the momentous question was put: "Does 'Jane, Joseph and John' mean that the Atlantic Monthly Press is going to undertake the publication of children's books?" "Oh, no, nothing of the kind," came the reply in cheerful but positive tones. It was not the editor who spoke, he was then in Europe. If anything very unusual and original for children were to come in, it might be considered for publication, but there were no "plans".

We rang off the telephone but we could not ring down the curtain on Mrs. Dodge and Mr. Scudder. We seemed to hear Mrs. Dodge saying once more, "Yes, I know. It *is* impossible of course, but let's do it just the same." And so, while the Atlantic Monthly Press had no apparent intention, in the fall of 1918, of leading a renaissance movement in the writing and publishing of books for children, we are not in the least surprised to learn of its very definite plans for the fall of 1919. The Atlantic Monthly Press announces the publication of good modern books for children, with the consistent maintenance of a high literary standard. Special attention is to be given to their illustration, typography, binding, etc. Librarians will note with interest and relief that the books are not to form a series—and parents with confidence, that the same editorial care will be given to them as to "The Atlantic Monthly" itself.

Somebody had to do it. We have confidently looked for just such an announcement from some competent source immediately following the war in Europe. Conferences, individual and collective, with publishers and booksellers preceding the holidays of 1918 confirmed our faith that the time was ripe in America for a vigorous movement of back to childhood and youth and their dramatic human interests. A number of publishers are eagerly looking for writers who have the power to communicate with chil-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dren and young people on their own initiative—writers who have practised the fundamental art of expression and are in touch with the life of the time. We are convinced that publishers do not want to go on supplying plots, scenes, and bits of character study from their offices. They really prefer authors who have ideas and the ability to express them, nor are they afraid to risk the work of unknown authors, provided it is good work.

Somehow or other, the impression seems to have got abroad that when one writes for children or young people, he divests himself as far as possible of any natural or acquired ability to write and adapts himself to a formula of what the publisher is looking for in a "successful juvenile". It is conceived that this formula must be subscribed to before embarking on the undertaking and there are many who shrink from the surrender. We are frequently consulted by authors and would-be authors, artists and would-be artists, as to the variations of the formula—each publisher, according to tradition, having a different one. With all of them, it is taken for granted, we are familiar, since there is a prevailing impression that librarians and publishers are always too busy with "devices" to read books in a natural fashion.

We may as well face frankly at the outset this reluctance to write for children on the part of competent writers, for it is symptomatic of a grave defect in our national education. We have drifted too far apart, in the life of our American colleges and universities, from the current of life in popular educational institutions in which the free use of books by children has been sustained for a generation or more. Too often we have "let George do it"—in our schools, in our libraries, and most of all perhaps in our homes. Reading for credit is a barren substitute for reading for love of a book. Why should we not look to our universities to blaze new trails for the stimulation of both writers and readers of books for children?

There is no better form of training in the fundamental art of expression than a sincere attempt to write to interest children and young people following competent lectures and discussions of comparative reading. Why not courses for readers?—the parents and teachers, publishers and booksellers, of the next generation—who need to be placed in a much more understanding relation to the resources on which they must rely in the education of children, if education is to become as important as we believe it to be.

When the Children's Room of the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and Forty-Second Street was opened, a little book marked "Suggestions from the Public" was placed at the reference desk. That was eight years ago and it is interesting to note how many of the things suggested have been carried out—how constantly we have turned for new ideas to that moving "public" made up of parents, teachers, authors, artists, uncles, aunts, editors, journalists, ministers, doctors, lawyers, actors, musicians, European professors and novelists, naval commanders and army officers, American publishers and librarians, booksellers, and above all, of children who have grown up in the room and who turn back to its service critical faculties developed there. Since we are often asked what kinds of books are most wanted at a given time, we will now confess to

PEORIA
PUBLIC LIBRARY
AUG 24 ...

REPRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drawing heavily upon "Suggestions from the Public" on occasion, just as we expect to draw heavily on THE BOOKMAN'S readers for this new department. We have undertaken to conduct it not because we were "sure we were equal to it", but because the work has so long needed to be done, and we had faith in the kind of help we should get from the editors and readers of THE BOOKMAN. "We come to bury" as well as "to praise", but we come primarily to stimulate more discussion of books in their intimate relation to the needs and desires of childhood and youth.

We have been a long time in leading up to the books of 1919, for we have less to say about them than we had anticipated. It has been impossible to see some of the most promising titles, even in galleys. The publishers have endeavored to supply information where text has not been available, but we are impressed with the necessity of securing more adequate information at an earlier date if the preliminary review is to serve the practical end of informing readers who wish to give prompt and careful attention to the selecting of books for children and for holiday exhibits.

The present indications are that the number of outstanding books for children and young people will be smaller than for 1918. Several publishers have had a dreary winter and spring, two or three are childless, to their regret but to our relief when we survey the variety of makeshifts and done-overs announced by others. We turn with a feeling of increased respect toward a house that has steadily declined manuscripts too poor for publication. There have been many such manuscripts in the market.

A number of extremely dull books have been brought over from England. Books of "Sound Science and Fascinating Reading", two of them are called. We do not question the science, but the children we know would not find them readable.

In selecting books for American children, great care should be taken to include none which belong to the present order of dead wood on library shelves. Books of science, invention, mechanics, sports, travel, biography, histories, stories—both modern fairy tales and stories of adventure,—all hold these lurking possibilities if they are not up-to-date or if written in a manner which seems remote to an American boy or girl. "Too English" they say of them as, no doubt, "too American" would be the English boy or girl's characterization of similar books written for the children of this country. We need to be very frank in this matter of interchange of books on informational subjects. They must not be dull and they must be authentic. In both countries there is a large heritage of didactic writing for children, which began accumulating immediately after the French Revolution. It varies slightly in style from one generation to another, but is easily recognized in kind—by children as books their parents and teachers seem to like, and by librarians as the dead wood of their shelves. It is our experience that the boys and girls of this generation are seeking more information and more authentic information from books than has been true of any previous age, but they have become more critical as to form and subject matter. Up-to-date reference books such as "The World Book" command respect because they do not pretend to be "fascinating reading", but deal, immediately and in English which can

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be easily read, with the subjects contained in them.

We have long contended that didacticism, condescension, and propaganda are the natural enemies of the reading habit in this country. Why are the library shelves containing books of science, travel, biography, especially collective biography, and European histories, so often called the deadest parts of a children's room? Not because the subjects in themselves are not interesting. Not because children do not want to know what the world is like. Their interest is keen in knowing what the world is like, as any good teacher of history or geography, any thoughtful parent or any intelligent librarian will tell you. The answer to the question and the remedy for the condition lie with the authors, illustrators, and publishers, and we may add, that in the solution of this problem there may be found an open door to more intelligent and friendly international relations.

From the days of Peter Parley we have been taking "peeps", "glimpses", "zigzag journeys", and "excursions" to various countries at an educational jog-trot.

Peter Parley and Jacob Abbott did some traveling, to be sure, but they also wrote extensively to the miscellaneous pictures provided by their publishers, and dwelt chiefly on the peculiarities and differences of the people they met and the places they visited. Neither they nor any of their long train of successors have given a sense of what it is like to live in another country and know the people as "real folks".

We have distributed remnants of history and poorly drawn portraits of very dead heroes and heroines, and then have wondered why so few children or grown people seem to be interested in other countries or races.

We have only a hint of what the Atlantic Monthly proposes to do in the matter of histories for children, but a book to be called "Heroes of the Great Crusade" is now in preparation. We often turn back to Dr. Crothers's "That History Should be Readable" in his "Gentle Reader", and we like to recall at this moment, William Roscoe Thayer's "History—Quick or Dead?" in "The Atlantic Monthly" of last October. Who is to read the "Quick" histories if not the young people of the country? Florence Converse evidently realizes both the need and the opportunity in her enlightening and sympathetic introduction to Nannine Meiklejohn's "The Cart of Many Colors", a well-written story of life in Italy in the Little Schoolmate Series. The books of this series are a notable exception to those to which we have objected, in that they have been written by persons who are native to the countries or have lived in them. They are unequal in interest and we have always regretted the series title, also the fact that Miss Converse's illuminating introductions begin with "Dear Schoolmate". The subject-matter is so valuable as to suggest a wider reading if given a distinctive chapter heading at the beginning or at the end of the book. We have seen nowhere so informing and so humanized an account of Italian life in America as Miss Converse gives in her introduction to "The Cart of Many Colors".

A most inspiriting announcement comes from the new house of Harcourt, Brace, and Howe. Dorothy Canfield is writing that much-needed "History of France for Young Folks". It promises to be the real thing, since she has been living and making French history for the past three years, and has her girlhood memories

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of France before the war and her keen sense of dramatic values to put behind it. It is not possible to express an equal degree of confidence in a resuscitation of Bonner's "Child's History of France", although we have not seen the text. We would strongly advise comparative reading or examination before purchase, in the case of all revisions of old texts in the fields of science, invention, history, travel, and biography. In rare instances do rewritten histories appeal to the reader. We do not here refer to such textual changes in school histories as are necessary to keep them up-to-date and to mark changes of national sentiment. Excellent and much-needed work has been done on our school histories since the war. We are asking for a more spacious order of book than a textbook can ever be.

We do not know, and we have refrained from asking the publishers, whether Geoffrey Parsons's "The Land of Fair Play" is to be used as a textbook on civics. We only know that it is a remarkably lucid and a very much more interesting presentation of "How America is Governed" than we have ever had before. The aims stated in the introduction are so well carried out and Mr. Parsons's style so completely exemplifies what we have been pleading for in the book of information, that we take heart and confidently look for that other book for which Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, Russians, Italians, Frenchmen, Chinese, Japanese and Englishmen have been asking for years. That "other book" is a one-volume history of America, true in its essential background, dramatic in form, in which the writer does not lose himself in colonization, the French and Indian war or in any of "our wars", but really tells the story of America to the children of other countries with an appeal to the heart as well as to the mind. No text-book, no book written as propaganda, could accomplish the work of such a book from the hands of a competent author, artist, translator, and publisher. It is as much needed by the children and young people of our own land as of any other; and there could be no fitter celebration of the landing of the pilgrims than an announcement that such a book under assured conditions is under way in 1920.

The new edition of "The Last of The Mohicans" bids fair to call out some of the best work N. C. Wyeth has done; we have seen only the end papers and cover design, but we have known what a good time Mr. Wyeth was having with the book. There could not be a more favorable moment for a revival of interest in Cooper in his relation to American history. In one of the library reading clubs last winter, the boys debated the merits of Cooper and Altsheler. Feeling they had a sure thing in his known popularity, the Altsheler side did no work, and the debate was won by the Cooper side who read Cooper to establish his claim to present consideration. The death of Mr. Altsheler in June is keenly felt by the boys and by all who have realized the value of his work in its relation to American life and American history. Mr. Altsheler's popularity has been greater in public libraries than that of any living writer for boys in the past twenty years, and his influence has been broader than that of any earlier writer for boys within our memory.

In THE BOOKMAN for last November, we gave our estimate of Mr. Altsheler's work. He has fortunately left unpublished works. "The Sun of Quebec" is announced in his French

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and Indian War series. We are confident that his publishers will place none of Mr. Altsheler's work in other hands to be finished. There can be no graver mistake committed than that of giving over the work of a popular author for boys or girls to be finished and announced under the name of the dead author. How often has the difference in style been pointed out and how keen is the resentment of the boy or girl critic, we are here to testify. "From Appomattox to Germany" bears the author's name on the title-page, and it is stated in the introduction that the author has followed the "method" of Coffin. We would characterize it as a camouflaged Coffin book bearing no other relation to the work of Charles Carleton Coffin than a confusing similarity in size and cover design. Starting with a most unfortunate title and a miscellaneous lot of old pictures it has achieved its weight—for it is very heavy—without continuity of historical style or dramatic appeal to the boy reader, who likes to live through a period. We cannot and do not recommend this book.

Our reaction to the revision of Francis Drake's "Indian History for Young Folks" is entirely different. The author's original work here forms the larger part of the volume, new material being added in separate chapters for the purpose of bringing up-to-date a standard history still in demand.

"The Romance of Aircraft" by Laurence Yard Smith is the first book to cover the early history of the subject in readable form for children's libraries and should be of immediate interest and value. The book not only tells of the experiments of flying in France in the eighteenth century—all types of aircraft are described, their invention, principles of flight, and their use during the war.

A story of aviation by Austin Bishop is announced by Mr. Harcourt as authentic in its information and interesting as a story.

"Czechoslovak Fairy Tales", retold for young folks by Parker Fillmore, and illustrated by Jan Matulka, is also announced by Mr. Harcourt, but has not been available for examination; nor have we seen "The Wonder Garden", a collection of nature myths and tales by Frances Jenkins Olcott and illustrated by Milo Winter.

Miss Olcott's work in the selection and adaptation of myths and fairy tales is well known for its sincerity of purpose and consideration for the understanding of children. We turn to older renderings, however, for the traditional atmosphere and color.

We have seen galleys for "The Children's Fairyland", an edition of Madame d'Aulnoy's tales, shortened and illustrated by silhouettes done by Harriet Mead Olcott. Children will be attracted to the tales in this form as an introduction to a more complete collection.

There is to be a new and attractive edition of Scudder's "Fables and Folk Stories", with illustrations in color by Maurice Day.

Padraic Colum has made a charming book of the Cinderella stories, calling it "The Girl Who Sat by the Ashes". The illustrations for it by Dugald Stewart Walker we have not seen, nor have we seen those of Mr. Pogany for Mr. Colum's rendering of the Norse myths. We will suspend judgment on this book until we have seen it in its entirety, but we gravely question its acceptance without a comparative reading of texts from Northern sources.

One of the distinctive books of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

year is a Mother Goose illustrated by Boyd Smith and edited with historical notes, and with the reprint of the first known preface to a child's book, by Lawrence Elmendorf. Boyd Smith and Miss Elmendorf worked individually upon this book. The illustrations are not historical but humorous. They vary in quality, the drawing of "the cow that jumped over the moon" and certain others being too realistic —and of the stock-farm for the Mother Goose, suggested by Randolph Caldecott and Leslie Brooke. Miss Elmendorf has done a piece of painstaking and scholarly work with the rhymes, and the book will form a valuable addition to the reference shelves of children's rooms and school libraries, as well as to gift books.

"The Æsop for Children", with some of Milo Winter's best work in its illustrations, is in striking contrast, for the fables have been attenuated and modernized. The work is unsigned and the book goes forth under the name of the artist and its publisher. We shall deal with this subject more adequately in a future article; but let us state right here that we are ready to take as strong a stand as need be on the matter of rewriting and reediting the classics for children. Hands off Mother Goose and the old fairy and folk tales, the poetry, and the great traditions of the race, unless the work is signed and there is fair evidence of competent literary treatment.

To our great regret we have not been able to find a children's book in "The Three Mulla-Mulgars" of Walter de la Mare. It is a story of monkeys —full of fascination and charm, of unusual words and quaint phrasing, but is not simple enough in style to be read by children in its present form. Mr. Knopf has given great care to its make-up and the book will doubtless find many appreciative readers.

Louis Dodge should get in touch with some real children. "Giddy" of "The Sandman's Mountain" without Paul Bransom's pictures (not yet available) is too remote to be convincing. He has disturbed us a good deal by failing to connect with life. We now conceive of him as an "only child" living in the suburbs with very uninteresting relatives having the kind of adventures Mr. Bransom so well illustrates in "The Sandman's Forest". We speak of these points because "The Sandman's Forest" has not been taken over by the children of the libraries and we learn that "Giddy doesn't seem like a live boy". Nor do the bears he sees seem like real bears.

The book that seems destined to be taken straight to the hearts of children, and of grownups who have the sense of nonsense and a love of little boys, is "David Blaize and the Blue Door". It reminds one of "Alice in Wonderland" but is not an imitation. Mr. Benson has created his own delightful pictures of David at the age of six. The breath of England is in it, the house, the garden, the lake, the rooks in the elm trees, the village. We feel all these even behind the "Blue Door" where everything comes alive to David—the flame cats on the nursery walls, Noah and the animals of the ark, the old brown trout in the lake, Bradshaw, Waterloo and all the rest. It seems the most natural thing in the world for a giraffe to open a third-story window and lean down to whisper in David's ear, "I live on surprises". So do we, for this book was not sent by its publishers, but discovered by sheer luck in an editor's office. We have seen the book, just published in the United States, only in an edition printed in England in December,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1918, to which the illustrations of H. J. Ford contribute since they are in harmony with the text; but the author himself has such a gift for making one see and feel that the book would be read if it had no pictures. We shall have more to say of this book in November—in its bearing on the reading of children under ten years old, and of "David Blaize", by the same author, in February—for after we had read "David Blaize and the Blue Door" we simply *had* to read "David Blaize", published several years ago, to see if there was any connection. There isn't, as a book, for "David Blaize" is the story of an English schoolboy, written for grown people rather than for boys. But there is a connection of another and subtler kind for all who have known intimately the little and big boyhood of men.

Jane, Joseph and John. By Ralph Bergengren. The Atlantic Monthly Press.

*Childhood in Literature and Art. By Horace E. Scudder. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Jungle Books. By Rudyard Kipling. The Century Co.

The World Book (in 8 volumes). Edited by M. V. O'Shea. World Book Inc.

The Cart of Many Colors. A story of Italy. By Nannine L. Meiklejohn. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The History of France for Young Folks. By Dorothy Canfield. Harcourt, Brace, and Howe.

The Land of Fair Play. By Geoffrey Parsons. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Last of the Mohicans. By James Fenimore Cooper. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Sun of Quebec. By Joseph Altsheler. D. Appleton and Co.

*For the adult reader.

Indian History for Young Folks. By Francis Drake. Harper and Bros.

The Romance of Aircraft. By Laurence Yard Smith. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The Story of Aviation. By Austin Bishop. Harcourt, Brace, and Howe.

Czechoslovak Fairy Tales. By Parker Fillmore. Harcourt, Brace, and Howe.

The Wonder Garden. By Frances Jenkins Olcott. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Children's Fairyland. By Harriet Mead Olcott. Henry Holt and Co.

Fables and Folk Stories. By Horace E. Scudder. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Girl Who Sat by the Ashes. By Padraic Colum. The Macmillan Co.

Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes. Edited by Lawrence Elmendorf and illustrated by Boyd Smith. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

*The Three Mulla-Mulgars. By Walter de la Mare. Alfred A. Knopf.

The Sandman's Mountain. By Louis Dodge. Charles Scribner's Sons.

David Blaize and the Blue Door. By E. F. Benson. George H. Doran Company.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE BOOK

BY JOHN S. PHILLIPS

A BOOK is a man. A library is a society of men. We come before them, great though they be, humble though we be, and we have no natural timidity, no awkwardness such as might be in actual contact. We look them in the face as equals. Perhaps even as if they sought our favor and good will. We are in a real democracy of which we are the center; in which we play an important rôle. We are fellow actors, in a great company of the elect, and we are necessary to the function. We cannot be snubbed, or neglected, or browbeaten, or made to feel our own littleness. We are there to receive; they cannot give without us, and it is their place and destiny to give. We almost feel as though we were kings of the world, as the Italians say, and these silent, great, expressive beings are there to speak at our nod and disclose their souls, their hearts, their brains, and display for us alone their artistry.

For no man can hide himself in a book, or let us say in his books. What he is, is there, and no will of his can keep it out. And in this we have hinted at the delight of books and of reading. The remote of the earth become our acquaintances; the ancient

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

become our friends; all are the interesting companions of our days and nights. I don't mean these small volumes, but the actual, undying personalities of which they are the sign and the emblem. We see them, often know them more definitely and clearly than we know our neighbors or even our kindred. They are self-portrayers, no matter what the form of their expressive art. The "Metamorphoses" sketch the amorous Ovid as clearly as the realistic "Memoirs of Casanova" depict that lascivious adventurer. The essays of Emerson, pruned so severely of the literal ego, are as vivid in self-portrayal as the essays of Montaigne, which abound in personal episodes, confessions of physical and mental habits, and boldly drawn traits of character.

Books are the one sure means of knowing at least one powerful and interesting class of our contemporaries. In a natural way, they lead from acquaintanceship into intimacy. I doubt if the closest friend of a great writer, say of New York, can know him as well as the devoted reader on a whaler laying to in the Behring Sea.

If you should meet Barrie, small, shrinking, indisposed to give himself to mere acquaintances, what you would get would be the result of an imagination working on the sense-impression of that curious, impassive but appealing face and figure. Go to his books, and he is your instant comrade, freely giving out the secrets of his sensitive heart and occult imagination.

Wells you might think an interesting man of the world, who passed you indifferently by because you did not immediately seize his attention. But there is a real Wells, half novelist and half philosopher, prying, experimenting, never reaching conclusions, sensing the flux of the human state as gleaming, dark, clear or obscure; himself a mobile and changing self, giving richly to you as he is at the time in a book, only to be another being in another book in which he just as freely confesses the adventurous change. And you—you are his confidant.

There is Kipling, probably of all time the greatest realist of a race. Kipling *is* England now, as he was England then, when he burst upon us, the most wonderful, chanting, exploring, high-spirited, virile youth of letters that ever took the seven seas. You couldn't know him so well if your garden joined his as you may with his books one after another in hand. He might keep you out of his garden, but he cannot keep you out of his gorgeous mind. Indeed, he invites in all and sundry.

Conrad is aloof in his countryside, somewhat reserved and practical in his person. But he will, even for us, unroll in his tapestried volumes the stories of strange scenes on sea and land, and flash his stranger characters that so fully exist by his magic in time and space and identity. Here, to you, he gives a truer quality of self than he could possibly give you face to face.

These are only examples from the Brotherhood of the Book, which takes us in as acolytes, novices, lay brothers; accepts us, opens the sacred lore, and discloses the mysteries of their rites, achieved in painful vigils of the spirit. We get these glimpses of their high calling and quality, though it isn't for us to hope to join the sacred band. The slightest book is a personal message; the greatest, a revelation of personality, made, as it were, to us alone, under our own lamp and by our own fireside.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

LONDON, *July* 1, 1919.

MOST of the English publishers are busy preparing for the coming autumn season with hopes that they may be able to produce the books for which they have arranged. I have no means of knowing whether the majority of them are optimistic or otherwise, but there is no doubt that the new conditions affecting labor will have a far-reaching effect. Already there is the distinct threat that paper is once more going up in price. The printers have instituted the new practice of giving all their employees a week's holiday at one time, and the wages of these employees have reached an unprecedented height. And there is still to be reckoned with the danger of strikes which may paralyze book production as well as everything else. In especial, there is the greatly increased danger of dictation from the union governing the publishing trade through so apparently minor a branch of its staffing as that of the packers. The packers have it within their power at any moment to call a halt.

It may seem very ludicrous that this should be the case, but it is the fact. Accordingly, while the publishers I know are very much occupied with new works, the spirit prevailing seems to be one of piety rather than confidence. It is a strange state of affairs. It becomes increasingly evident that for the future the author will be the least important person in the great trade of letters. He writes a book in less time than it now takes to put it through the press. His share of the profits (if any) is less than that of the printer and even the binder. His whole income may be held up because packers of whom he has never heard may quarrel with a publisher in whose list he has never figured, and so stop the printing and circulation of an immortal work. *C'est la paix!*

* * * *

These being the circumstances, it is no wonder that publishers are a little chary of declaring so early exactly the books they are going to publish this year. They very likely have not received the manuscripts which they have been promised; they may have received the manuscripts, but may not have received any proofs; they have assuredly received no promises from the printers for the delivery of books only recently put in hand. They feel that to announce such books—such, as it were, hypothetical books—would be a tempting of providence. I am sure that many works will again be held over until next year. It is becoming the custom to hold books over from season to season, chiefly owing to the immense time which it now takes to get a book through the press.

* * * *

Meanwhile, certain facts are clear. There is to be a decided slump in anything remotely connected with the war. Magazine editors are writing to their contributors announcing that they do not wish to see any story in which the war is so much as mentioned (I have been shown such a letter by a writer who, before the war, was in the habit of contributing vigorous tales of action to some of the lead-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing magazines here). Publishers and booksellers take very much the same line. Accordingly there will be fewer books this autumn than last which record personal experience or describe particular aspects of the war. What books there are will be those which, from one cause or another, have been held over from the spring.

One of these is the book which has been written about the part played by the British Mercantile Marine. It is called "Merchantmen-at-Arms", and is written by Captain David Bone and illustrated by Muirhead Bone. I know nothing about the book, but David Bone is the author of a very successful and distinguished novel of life at sea entitled "The Brassbounder". He saw service as commander of a merchantman which had its own troubles with German submarines. One of these he nearly rammed; and it is extraordinary to hear Bone describe the event, very quietly, and explain how it was that, the miss being so narrow, the submarine emerged so close to his ship that he could not train his gun upon it. Muirhead Bone, of course, is well known to Americans as one of the most distinguished of living artists. There are, I believe, four of the brothers Bone. I only know three. The third is the London editor of the Manchester "Guardian", and a writer of immense dry humor. They all hail from Glasgow, and if the book is what I expect it to be, it will be a worthy record of services incalculable in their importance. A unique record.

* * * *

Other art books are, first of all, the new edition—this time a complete translation—of de Coster's "Tyl Ulenspiegel". An incomplete translation of this curious work was published last year; but Heinemann is bringing out a perfect, unabridged version, with illustrations by Jean de Bosschère. I look forward to this version, because I have never read the book, and have only the report of others to the effect that it is a great modern classic. I hear that somebody else has translated the "Flemish Legends" of de Coster. These I certainly have read, and they have a delicious quaintness comparable to that of the models upon which they have been based—the various secular mediæval legends which have been making from time to time belated appearances in translation.

I hear that among art books there are to be two of considerable interest to modern artists. The first of them is a collection of drawings by a young Polish artist named Meninsky, derived from those recently exhibited at the Goupil Gallery under the general description of "Maternity". That is, they were the picturesque representation of mothers and children. As Meninsky is little known as yet—outside those who really follow the work of young artists—the success of his exhibition is notable; and the publication by Lane of a selection of the drawings, with an appropriate text, is a piece of enterprise worthy of high praise. There is at last to be a large illustrated study of the work of Epstein. This, perhaps, is overdue; but Epstein has had to fight against a good deal of hostility, and the position to which he is unquestionably entitled by his talent has been obscured by a number of grotesque moral criticisms of his sculpture which had no relation to its value as art.

* * * *

John Lane himself is said to be writing his memoirs, but whether this book is to appear this year or not I cannot say. Lane was, in the 'nineties, the great publisher of all that was new

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and surprising. He was one of the first, if not the first, to encourage Aubrey Beardsley. He published for Wilde, Arthur Symons, Le Gallienne, John Davidson, Henry Harland, Dowson, and many others whose names are associated with the most characteristic work of the 'nineties. He published the first book of Arnold Bennett, and any amount of poetry and belles lettres which no other publisher would have had the instinct to appreciate. He must have met many of the most interesting of modern writers and artists. If what he has to tell illumines the character of these people the book will be a mine, and have a furore.

* * * *

Following this book will assuredly be the second volume of Wilfrid Blunt's "Diaries", which should be even more interesting to readers not absorbed in Egyptian affairs than was the first volume. Mr. Blunt has had, as I mentioned last month, an enormous acquaintance with the writers of the last half of the nineteenth century, and I expect his accounts of them will be deliciously caustic. Another book of literary interest will be the biography of Robert Ross which an author whose name I am not at liberty to mention is writing. Ross, as I expect American readers will remember, was the literary executor of Wilde. What may not be so well known is that he was one of the most popular men in English literary society. His death did really cast a gloom over many, for he was very widely known and loved. I only met him twice, and so I can hardly speak from experience, although we certainly talked freely, and, upon his side, with charm and cordiality. He was interested in everything. At the time I saw him he was in the habit of taking wounded soldiers in parties to cinema shows, and he was full of enthusiasm for a particular film which had deeply impressed him. But my own recollection is so imperfect (we were talking together in a group of eight or nine persons) that I shall welcome the book, when it appears, as a reminder of so attractive a nature and so pleasant an occasion.

* * * *

A book which will probably have interest above the usual is to be issued here by Macmillans. It is a most elaborate study of the Russian Revolution and of the growth and development of the power of the Bolsheviks. It is supported by a great array of quotations from genuine Russian sources; and while the author is profoundly anti-Bolshevik, she has sought to produce a work of historical interest and value. The author is Mrs. Harold Williams, the wife—a Russian—of Dr. Williams, whose special correspondence for the London "Daily Chronicle" won him from the outset of the war an immense following in England. Mrs. Williams is a woman of very great individuality. She can from personal experience tell stories of Tolstoi and Tchekhov and the living Russian writers. She has often startled me by penetrating observations both upon character and upon literature. She has probably produced a book of the utmost importance. The last words I have seen from her husband were dated from some unpronounceable town in the Caucasus; and the entire Williams family is devoted to the cause of Russia as it is represented by the party of Milyukov. Mrs. Williams has a son and daughter by a former husband; and while her daughter has been with her since the escape from Russia, she had previously seen active service on the Russian front

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and has had some thrilling and horrible adventures in Galicia and Poland. Mrs. Williams's son has had even more exciting times; and his recent adventures with the Bolsheviks, and his eventual escape to England would make a fine subject for a romance for anybody able to picture the Russian backgrounds. Harold Williams is one of the most shy, charming, and interesting men I have ever met. He is full of strange knowledges. His experience has taken him well over the world and his linguistic capacity is enormous (I have myself heard him carrying on, at one time, conversations in Russian, French, and English; and have heard him sing "Tipperary" in Maori). His own book upon Russia, when it comes, should be of the greatest value, as, in the meantime, his letters continue to be. And anything written by his wife, who speaks authoritatively, is bound to have authentic value.

* * * *

A cheerful writer in the New York "Sun" said a little while ago that "the best of the English lot (of satirists) is A. A. Milne—disqualifying 'Max' as an author of international fame". Well, but Milne is more than a satirist. He was at one time subeditor of "Punch" (a paper which Americans find amusing after they have been for some months in England, which seems to suggest that the humor of "Punch", or at any rate its appreciation, is a matter of climate). He is the author of at least one experiment in the field of romantic fairy legend—a tale called, very characteristically, "Once Upon a Time", in which the possession of a pair of seven-league boots produces a war and any number of extraordinary complications. And he also wrote the "children's pantomime and review" which was chosen as the opening entertainment offered last Christmas at the newly reformed Lyric Opera House at Hammersmith. This "review" was a work obviously influenced by "Peter Pan", but it was also enjoyable on account of the charming fancy which made every scene a joy to those with a sense of verbal delicacy and gentle wit.

Milne has written a number of plays, chief among them "Belinda". "Belinda" was played here last year, and although it is very slight, as all Milne's work is, it had a success, and it has some remarkably happy work in it. A collection of the author's plays is in preparation. Milne is a young Scotsman who had a rough time in the war, and after three years of active service as an infantryman was returned damaged to England, where his talent was employed in the composition of work which one would have supposed more congenial to his temperament than the work of savage combat. He is a great enthusiast for the theatre, and a great enthusiast for what may be called the "fantasy" in common life. I think he will do notable things in the theatre if only he can reach a more robust technique than he has yet achieved. He has plenty of talent and a lovely wit and charm as a writer. The volume of plays ought to show his gifts in a clear light.

* * * *

In the field of the novel the outlook is somewhat obscure. There will, of course, be the customary flood of "best sellers" and tales for the home. There will be a new work by the ubiquitous Herbert Jenkins, who finds time amid the distractions of publishing for the composition of humorous novels of amazing sales. It is called, I believe, "Mr. Dene of Toronto", but of its character I know nothing. Neither

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wells nor Bennett will have a novel out this autumn. Bennett is busy on plays, of which perhaps two will be produced here before the end of 1919. Galsworthy's new book, to be issued later here, has already been published in the United States under the title of "Saint's Progress". Conrad has one novel—"The Arrow of Gold", already published in the United States—appearing soon; and I believe his next book, "The Rescue", will be held over until 1920.*

Of the younger "literary" novelists Walpole will be represented by his "Jeremy", which has been running in this magazine as a serial. Compton Mackenzie will have a new tale ready, called "Poor Relations". This is a story about a successful playwright who returns from America (the scene of his triumphs) to find a hungry band of relatives waiting to ingratiate themselves and to divert possible charities from the rest to themselves. In essence it is a lively farcical comedy of life in the country. Gilbert Cannan will have at least one book ready, with the title "Time and Eternity". The technical feature of this book—which I am told is really interesting and distinguished—is that it is divided into three long chapters. I understand that it is otherwise continuous. Frank Swinnerton's new book is called "September". It is a close study of a woman of thirty-eight, who is contrasted in temperament and in fortune with a young girl of character no less strong. The book is practically a picture of the conflict in love between these two women. The publishers describe it as belonging somewhat to the genre of "Nocturne", but the milieu is certainly different, since the book deals with the life of the leisured class. Morley Roberts has written a novel of "sex" (or so, at least, I am informed) which will probably be very much discussed. Morley Roberts is a novelist of such talent that any book of his is bound to possess great interest for students of human nature, and I understand that this work is the most ambitious he has attempted since "Time and Thomas Waring", which created a stir here in 1913 or thereabouts.

Gilbert Frankau tells me that his novel, "Peter Jackson", which was written some time ago and is now to appear, may be out this year. I am not sure, however, whether it will first be serialized, or whether we shall have it this autumn in book form. Frankau, who saw some very varied service in the war, is, as everybody knows, the son of the late "Frank Danby", and his first novel, "The Woman of the Horizon", had considerable popular success here a couple of years ago. Personally, I find nothing of Frankau's so good as his "Novel in Verse", called "One of Us". This had a positively marvelous success here a few years ago, and is, both metrically and in its satiric limning of tawdry smart life, a performance noteworthy in a man as young as Frankau was at the time it was written. He is one of the "thirty-five" brigade of young novelists, lives in the country, keeps chickens, writes verse in the Kipling manner, and cultivates the most remarkable combination of youth and age that I have ever met. He has a lively sense of the world, as his two poetic satires show; but in many matters is still a child, so that he may yet astonish the press and the public by

*As May Sinclair, J. C. Snaith, E. M. Delafield, Somerset Maugham, and W. L. George are represented in the summer lists, they will not have anything fresh before Christmas. James Joyce's "Ulysses" *may* be ready; but it is more likely to be deferred. I have referred in a previous causerie to Brett Young's "The Young Physician".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

producing a novel of abounding popularity.

* * * *

I said just now that Wells was to have no new novel. But he may have a book even more astounding. He is engaged upon a task, to which I mysteriously referred a couple of months ago, of really stupendous magnitude. It is nothing more or less than the composition of a mammoth history of the world which may consist of perhaps three hundred or three hundred and fifty thousand words. I mention the length, not because the length of a book is any criterion of its importance, but because I know of nothing which gives to the lay mind so impressive a notion of the amount of work in any given piece of writing. Looking at a printed book, one is tempted to ignore the labor involved in its composition. But the other day I was in company with two men who contemplated with awe a finished manuscript less than a hundred thousand words in length. They said: "Just think of sitting down to *copy out* a novel that has already been printed; and then imagine the strain of *inventing* it as well!" Very well, just think of the time occupied in amassing the mere details required in the composition of such a history, and remember the knowledge which one must first possess in order to get any significance and order into such a mass of material. And then think of the actual writing.

I must admit that, much as I admire Wells, I have never until now done justice to the simply enormous courage he must have in embarking upon a huge universal history of this kind. It begins with the earliest things known or conceived about the world we live in. It goes through the ages. It peeps into the future. No doubt many wiseacres and academic critics and professors will say, archly enough: "It is magnificent. But it is not history". I am quite prepared for that. But think what a feast it will be for the imagination, and what a stimulant for the brain. And think of the stupendous daring of it. If the book appears this autumn, it will certainly wash out everything else that I have mentioned in this causerie. Whenever it appears it will be a publishing event of the first magnitude, and a milestone, I imagine, in the history of English education. And, remember, there is no other man of our day who could do such a thing. With all his faults, Wells stands by himself. By the æsthetic critics of every kind he is dismissed afresh each year; but he survives because there is this supremely important quality in his work —the quality that it could be done by no other man. That is a very good test of originality, which is the ultimate test of the value of any writer or artist under the sun. If a man's work can be done by another he is distinctly second-rate. As long as he creates things altogether peculiar to himself, he is, whatever his imperfections according to exacting æsthetic standards, that rare and valuable thing, an original. Wells is an original.

SIMON PURE

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE

NEW YORK, *August*, 1919.

I ADMIT that (though, indeed, I can claim a very fair collection of authors as acquaintances) I share the popular interest in the idiosyncratic nature of the literary profession. I am as curious as to the occult workings of the minds of authors, the esoteric process by which subtle insinuations of inspiration are translated into works of literary art, as though I had never seen an author—off a platform. I would read the riddle of genius. I am fascinated by its impenetrable mysteries. I would explore the recesses of the creative head.

Therefore, in the presence of the treasure of such incalculable value which is before me, I experience tense intellectual excitement. In the thought of its possession by myself I find the uttermost felicity. What it is is this: it is *a humorous writer's note-book.*

I must tell you the wonderful story—how this came into my hands, and how, romantically enough, it is, so to say, by the bequest of the author himself, your own possession. The strange circumstances are as follows:

Something like a week ago I received through the post at my place of residence an oblong package. It was similar in shape to an ordinary brick; not so heavy, and somewhat larger. I had ordered nothing from a shop, and so, as the parcel was plainly addressed to myself, I concluded that it must contain a present. As I am very fond of presents, I was, with much eagerness, about to open the package, when I suddenly recollected the newspaper reports of the recent dastardly Bolshevist bomb plots; the sending through the mails, by some apparently organized agency, to prominent persons in all parts of the country of these skilfully disguised engines of death and destruction. They were outwardly, I recalled, innocent looking parcels, which when opened blew housemaids to bits, demolished dwellings and, in some instances, accomplished the murder of the personage who had incurred the enmity of the criminals.

I bounded some considerable distance away from the object before me. Though, after a moment, I did, indeed, reflect that I was not what would probably be regarded as an eminent citizen, and had never felt a sense of power in the government of my country, I could not dissolve a decided distaste toward my undoing this mysterious parcel. Also I did not enjoy seeing it remain there on my table. And, further, I had no inclination to carry it from the room.

In this dilemma it occurred to me to summon the janitor of the apartment house where I reside. When I had explained to him that, because of my having a sore thumb (which made it painful for me to handle things), I wished him to open this package for me—, when I had explained this to him, he told me that he was very much occupied at the moment mending the boiler downstairs, and that he must hasten to this occupation, otherwise the lower floors would shortly be flooded. And he withdrew without further ceremony.

I sat down to consider the situation.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I realized that it was a bothersome moral responsibility—placing the lives of others (even if janitors) in jeopardy. But something must be done; and done soon—perhaps there was a time fuse in this thing. A thought came to me (the buzzer of our dumb-waiter sounded at the moment); I decided to go further down the scale in the value of human life to be risked. So I communicated down the shaft to our iceman (one Jack) that I desired his presence in the apartment. Well, the upshot of the matter is that Jack showed no hesitation whatever about coolly putting the package in a pail of water and afterward undoing it.

The parcel proved to be an ordinary cigar-box (labeled outside, in the decorative fashion of cigar-box labels, "Angels of Commerce"); within was a letter resting upon a note-book, and beneath that the manuscripts of two short stories. The submersion of the box would have (most disastrously) obliterated, or gone near to obliterating, the message of the letter and the writing in the note-book and the manuscripts, had not (happily) these things been packed tightly into the box by surrounding waste paper.

The letter was from Angus Bleak, known to us all—a humorist if there ever was one. I cannot say that I had been on intimate terms with Mr. Bleak; indeed (to admit the truth) all my acquaintance with authors is slight. I admire authors so much that it is the joy of my life to be acceptable to them in any degree. I put myself in their way at every opportunity. I regard it as a great privilege (as, certainly, it is) to spend freely of my income in entertaining them at meals. And in this way and that it is that I have attained the honor of hobnobbing with a number of writers, when they are not otherwise engaged.

As I say, I had not been on intimate terms with Mr. Bleak; and so I was no little surprised (and, I admit, no little flattered) at this decided attention (whatever it might mean) to me. The letter was not (oh, not at all!) a humorous letter. It was a very solemn letter. It said that Mr. Bleak was just about to go to the war. I was, naturally, puzzled at this: the war is (theoretically) over. I hunted round and found a piece of the wrapping paper which had enclosed the box. On it was the postmark (the paper had dried somewhat); and the stamp bore the date of October 1, 1917. I was still more puzzled as to where the box could have been all this while. Then, I recollected the heroic labors of the post-office in maintaining any kind of a schedule of delivery during the war. My poor friend's box had been goodness knows where all this time!

The letter stated (as I have said) that Mr. Bleak was about to go to the war—as a newspaper correspondent. It said (oh, it almost made one weep, so solemn was it!) that he might never return from "over there". In case he did not come back (the letter continued), he (Mr. Bleak) wished me to undertake the charge of placing the enclosed manuscripts with some magazine or magazines; the money got from them, though it was inadequate he knew (so he said), he prayed that I would accept as payment for the advances which I had made him from time to time. (Alas! my poor friend, what were those miserable loans compared to the wealth of his society! How I remember that proud day when he called me, so pallike, a "poor fish"!) But this is not a time to indulge one's grief; I must press on with my story.

The remainder of his literary effects, he said, (meaning, of course,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the note-book) he desired me (as he knew I had some connection with that magazine) to present to THE BOOKMAN. Little more remains to be said here of Mr. Bleak (my friend). He was not called upon to lay down his life for his country (or his paper); after the armistice he went valiantly into Germany; and there (as the papers have reported) he contracted a marriage; and is little likely again to be seen in these parts.

The first page of the note-book, headed "Jottings", contains these entries:

"Good name for a small orphan—Tommy Crandle.

"Fat person—shrugged his stomach.

"Name for a spendthrift—Charles Spending.

"Aphorism—Fear makes cowards of us all.

"Billy Sparks—fine name for a lawyer.

"Nice name for a landlady—Mrs. Baggs.

"Humorous Christian name for a fat boy—Moscow.

"Name for a clerk—Mr. Fife.

"Good name for someone to cry out on a dark night—Peter Clue! Peter Clue!

"Good name for a sporting character—Bob Paddock.

"Aphorism—A fool and his foot are soon in it."

* * *

Then follows this on umbrellas, evidently the opening of an unwritten essay:

"'And, like umbrellas, with their feathers
Shield you in all sorts of weathers.'
—MICHAEL DRAYTON.

"Among all the ingenious engines which man has contrived for his ornament and protection none, certainly, is more richly idiosyncratic than the umbrella. Literary genius has always instinctively recognized this; and doubtless the esoteric fact has been vaguely felt even by the unthinking; but it is a profound truth which, I fear, has had but slight popular appreciation.

"The use of this historic and peculiarly eloquent article of personal property, the umbrella, illustrates pictorially a proverbial allusion to the manifestation of intelligence: it shows that a man has 'sense enough to go in out of the rain'. It reveals not only the profundity of his judgment but the extraordinary play of his cleverness, as it exhibits him as the only animal who after crawling into his hole, figuratively speaking, pulls his hole in after him, or, in other words, carries his roof with him. Further than this, in the idea of carrying an umbrella you find the secret of man's striking success in the world: the intrepidity of his spirit in his tenacious pursuit of his own affairs defies both the black cloud's downpour and the sun's hot eye."

* * *

There is this, headed "Humor":

"There was once a man who was nearly dead from a disease. One day while taking the air, a friend cried to him encouragingly, 'Well, I see that you're up and about again.' 'Yes', replied the sick man good-naturedly, 'I'm able to walk the length of the block now.' This notion was so irresistible that both the quick and the dying burst into laughter."

* * *

Among the longer entries in this note-book is the following remarkable psychological study, having as its title "Temperament":

"That morning Kendle had seen

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

himself famous. As he worked he began to feel good in his brain and in his heart and in his stomach. He felt virile, elated, full of power, and strangely happy. The joy of creating a thing of art was upon him. Thrills ran down his spine and into his legs. As he looked at his work he admired it. He knew that this was good art. He felt that here was genius. He saw himself in a delectable picture, an idol applauded of the multitude, and loved by it. For he believed that the multitude was born, and ate and slept, and squabbled among itself, and acquired property, and begot offspring, but to await the arrival of genius. And the only genius he knew was genius in eccentric painting. The only genius worth while that is, for there is a genius that invents labor-saving machines, telephones, X-rays, and so forth; but nobody loves that genius. It occurred to him that he was a very lovable man, with all his faults (his faults were the lovable ones of genius), and he would soon have achieved a distinction that would make any woman proud of him. He determined to renew his addresses to ——.

"Somehow in the evening his intoxication had died down. He felt very sad. His work lay before him with so little eccentricity to it that he was ashamed. His sense of power had quite departed. And now he dismally felt that he would never amount to anything. He was a failure. An idle, wicked, disgraceful fellow, no good in the world, and not worth any woman's attention. His heart felt sick when he thought this. He was very miserable. He despised himself. So he sighed. It would have been better, he thought, if he had apprenticed himself to the plumber's trade in his boyhood. He would in that case have grown up happy and contented, remained at home and done his duty, respected by his neighbors and himself, though only a plumber. A plumber is a good honest man that pays his debts.

"At home! Why was he not there, anyway? What good was he doing away from there? There was his mother, in her declining years. Was his place not by her side? He would never desert his mother, he thought. And Sis! there was Sis. He would never desert Sis. How good they had been to him! How they believed in him! (he squirmed) how they believed in him still. He imagined them showing his most sensible pictures around to the neighbors. 'My son is an artist,' he heard his mother say. His flesh crawled. How mad he had been! How contemptible he was! Still a man was not hopeless who had a soul for such feelings as he had now. He would reform. He would henceforth eschew the company of such as Walker. He enumerated his vices and renounced them one by one. He began life over again. He would bask in the simple domestic pleasures of his mother in her declining years, and Sis. He would get up very early every morning and go to his humble toil before it was quite light. He felt himself walking along in the chill of dawn—the street lamps still lit. He would work hard all day. He would always tell the truth. Every Saturday night he would come home tired out, with fifteen dollars in his pocket. This he would throw into his mother's lap. 'Here, mother', he would say in a fine manly voice, 'here is fifteen dollars.' His mother would put her apron to her eyes, and look at him through tears of pride and joy. He would wear old clothes and be very honest and upright looking, the sort of young man that Russell Sage would have approved, that Sis might dress.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He would not mind the sneers and gibes of the world, for he would be *right.*

"He looked defiantly around the room for a few sneers and gibes."

MURRAY HILL

CURRENT TASTE IN FICTION: A QUARTERLY SURVEY

BY JOHN WALCOTT

OUR running commentary on current taste in fiction during the past year, has rested frankly and primarily on what the people want,—the people as a majority in so far as they happen to be a novel-reading people. Taking fiction in the large, we have to own that there is another large people or public which devours the short story as it appears in the magazines, but seldom or never reads a novel at all. It does not even care much for collections of short stories as bound between stiff covers. There are curious prejudices and inhibitions to be kept in mind by the canny publisher. I recall being told by a well-known bookseller a few months ago that in his opinion the publishers of Sir Gilbert Parker's latest book had made a serious mistake in offering two short novels in a single volume. He said, if I remember rightly, that it would have been better business to make a fair-sized book of "Wild Youth" by itself, as could easily have been done by using thicker paper and a more open page. The novel-reader, apparently, expects about such a sized book for his money, and has an eye for the number of pages rather than the number of words; and for some mysterious "psychological" reason resents having two obviously short novels or "long short stories" palmed off on him as a book. Well, there is one of the queer traits of the book-buyer—a rather handy one, I should think, for the book-maker.

On the other hand there seems to be a growing constituency for the connected group of stories, separate and yet linked by the appearance of the same characters and scenes. Sax Rohmer's "Tales of Secret Egypt" and Sherwood Anderson's "Winesburg, Ohio", among the more recent books of the type, show what a range is open for such fiction. And again there has been a cheerful acceptance of late of what I may call the episodic novel: almost all of Galsworthy's work is episodic. Mrs. Wharton is always at her best in the novelette rather than in the novel, because the novelette confines her to the extended treatment of an episode, which is her natural "lay", instead of leaving her exposed to the uncongenial range of the full-length novel. Swinnerton's "Nocturne" is an episode. Joseph Hergesheimer's "Three Black Pennys" is a sort of trilogy of episodes, three closely linked novelettes which get force from each other and give it back, in a very effective way.

But the novel proper, the deliberate and sustained action chronicled in four hundred pages or so, keeps at the head with the fiction-reading public that gets its provender at the library stack and the bookshop,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rather than of the train agent or corner bookstall. In short, we can't even begin to discuss taste in fiction (or in anything else) without falling into some kind of classifying process. "What the people want" is a question that hangs, whether you wish it to or not, on what you mean by "the people", and all attempts at estimating the will of the majority are qualified by the fact that there ain't no majority —if you mean by that a solid unit that overtowers and outweighs all analogous units. THE BOOKMAN for years printed as perhaps its best-known feature a list of "best sellers" made up from the returns of booksellers all over the country. It was amusing, but for various reasons proved unreliable. One quaint item was that here and there a dealer with a hundred unsold copies of a certain book on his hands would be tempted to report that book as in demand in order to create a demand! We were supposed to be finding out what novels "the people" were actually paying good money for. We were after the brutal figures. But there is no virtue in brutal figures unless they are also honest; and, lady-novelists to the contrary (the word lady is used advisedly in this connection) brutality and honesty are not always the same thing or even twin things.

The present "monthly score", on the other hand, is a reliable record of fact. All pains are evidently taken to make it so. But it is another kind of fact, concerning another kind of "people" and as to whether the book-buying, or the book-borrowing public is superior in point of taste—or, let us say, really best represents the public, the great majority, who can say? However, there are various signs of the weather, all sorts of hints from what the booksellers say, and the librarians give forth, and the editors intimate, and the publishers protest, and the woman's club and the smoking car and the fellow over the hedge of a Sunday morning let fall, there are trumpetings from the street and rumblings from the cellarage and vibrations in the circumambient ether, —wherefrom we may hazard an estimate, from time to time, as to the way the novel is going,—from the point of view, let us say, of that still considerable world which does not actually write the novels. An enterprising publisher has just issued two sprightly effusions, or compilations, on "The Women Who Make Our Novels", and "The Men Who Make Our Novels". I incline to think that a fresher and more difficult job would be a thoroughgoing study of "The People Who Read Our Novels".

It would have to begin, and perhaps it would have to end, with the kind of distinction you may deplore but cannot dispense with. You would have to insist once more on that unpopular recognition of a literary aristocracy and a literary proletariat—the best people and the Pee-pul. And you would have to recognize the existence of a bourgeoisie of various grades, tolerably susceptible, as a whole, to the exploits of a clever and determined mediocrity. But Heavens, let's talk United States. Here is Midville, Idaho. It has a population of forty-five thousand, a Carnegie library, government by both commission and omission, nine movie houses, and two bookstores. There is also a local college on the hill, with an Athenæum in its purlieus, where professors and allied parasites browse by virtue of their high privilege as stockholders. Finally (as far as we are concerned) three department stores carrying book-counters, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you can get the latest thing by R. W. Chambers in the lending libraries of several drug emporia. No, that should not be *finally*, for the mails are open, and books may be had direct from the source—which is in nine cases out of ten New York.

Well, then, what is Midville's Current Taste in Fiction? How does it, or she, react to the insistence or coquetry of living letters as represented by the novel? Is she wise as she is fair? Does she on the whole make a decent response to the more serious overtures of the more responsible interpreters—story-tellers? Or, what is more important, does she want the best fiction of its kind, whatever that kind may be? I shall not try to answer any of these questions definitely. I can only report the substance of the vague messages brought by western airs and the little birds who ride thereon from the prosperous city of Midville. There is a bookseller, the better of the two, and the librarians, and a fellow I know on the college faculty, and a nephew who is a sophomore and who nosed around the department stores and drugshops for me on a recent rainy day. Out of them all I have got a sort of "line" on the present state of Midville as a novel-reading, novel-buying or -sipping or -bolting or -munching or -gumming municipality. It may stand fairly enough for the ordinary American community. The bookseller and the librarians, in a sense, I interviewed myself, and their evidence I may specify.

The head of the Midville Carnegie library is a little man with a rusty beard and a dusty eye and the gentle but firm air of your guardian of the printed word. He knows the last wrinkle in library methods. He regards his clients the public with benign detachment, is pleased when they show signs of intelligence, but looks upon any such showing as pure velvet in his trade. He is not much inclined to make undemocratic distinctions between his borrowers. He says they are asking for about the same kinds of things as usual. On the whole, there has been a little more demand for books of "non-fiction", quite recently. But of course, there were a good many library-borrowers who never read anything *but* fiction. When you came down to figures, the BOOKMAN Monthly Score about represented the situation in Midville. In general, they were the novels most called for at his desk.

Weren't they a better lot than common?

Why, yes, he supposed they might be. There was "The Four Horsemen", that had stayed at the top of the list for nearly a year. Nothing trashy about that book, and people still wanted it, though in general there was a falling off in demand for war novels. Then there were "The Secret City" and "The Arrow of Gold"—you would hardly have found them taking such a lead among the popular novels a few years ago.

Didn't he think the big public, the Great Majority of novel-readers, were beginning to have an inkling that fiction needn't be empty to be amusing,—that a story might be a good story and still contribute to our understanding and rational enjoyment of—

A cautious palm was lifted here. He wouldn't pretend to be sure of that, on the evidence of a few books here and there. But the signs were encouraging for something of the kind, later on. Of course the libraries were doing what they could to encourage such tendencies. On the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whole, perhaps people were taking a little more stock in the novel as a serious form of literature.

I said I supposed this might be by way of reaction from that damnable Puritanism we have heard so much about of late. So long as the novel was regarded as a dope or a dram, there seemed to be little use in fussing over a choice. All fiction was lying as all liquor was rum; and everybody knew that when you had taken your first glass you might as well lie down in the gutter and be done with it.

Ah, said my bookworm with a twinkle, that wasn't really the Puritans. Had I ever read the records of any ancient New England town? They thought very well of their rum, and carried it, on the whole, pretty skilfully. What these young moderns meant when they said Puritanism was really an invention of the nineteenth century, and this being the twentieth they were naturally very angry at the nineteenth—the way of "moderns" in every age. . . .

The Midville Athenæum is presided over by a very intelligent lady of hardly middle age, a member of one of the best families on the hill. Many of her stockholding constituency are personal friends. She talks the new books over with them. They are a select or at least a special public for the novel. For one thing, they do not dream of confining themselves to the novel, and in consequence, perhaps, they bring something to their story-reading as well as take something from it. Yes, as you say, they are a highbrow lot. Still, they are human.

Of course, says this attractive lady, when you talk about taste and mean demand, you are mixing things a little. Among any class of readers there are always a good many who follow the other sheep over the wall. "What's this novel everybody is talking about? I must get that," represents their ordinary method of approach. They are among the people we are figuring about, the people who "want", but their wanting only represents a sort of feeble reflection of somebody else's taste. Here in the Athenæum we have fewer of them than in the public libraries, maybe.

But who (says the imaginary interviewer) is the "somebody else" that has the taste that starts the fashion that breeds the want that flocks to the Athenæum?

Nobody knows.

One thing can be said, that the Athenæum members seem to be more and more on the lookout for good material by new hands. They are less likely to ask for the latest so-and-so, and more likely to ask if there is anything good by some fresh writer. Perhaps that is why a remarkable number of "first novels" of unusual quality have appeared this past year or two. Novels of healthy realism are, it appears, more called for than ever.

So we fare down the hill to our good bookseller—quite another county to be heard from. And one of the first things we hear is a corroboration of the last item of testimony from our lady librarian. The buyers of Midville as well as the borrowers, have been showing, quite lately, an increased appetite for the higher realistic fiction. Just after the armistice there was a temporary reaction in favor of reckless romance, as the handiest road away from the near past. Only let us get out of this real world that has worried itself into such a mess and worn us to a frazzle in the process, and we didn't care what yarns you offered us. Now we

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

swing back—but not to the war stuff. War fiction, says the good bookseller of Midville (that composite of good booksellers the country over) is a door-nail. People don't want it and won't have it.

But a moment first for romance, which of course still has the majority (brute or not) with and for it. A few historical romances are still being ground out, but there is a limited and if anything lessening demand for them. There are always some people who like them, just as there are some people who patronize a costume play without resenting the costume or the thou-y lingo that goes with it. Stories of free adventure in modern setting have their steady market, yarns of the fabulous East or of the almost equally fabulous Wild West. Some slackening in the popularity of the range and trail stuff may have taken place within the past month or two. Detective stories, on the other hand, "sell better than ever". People are preferring their mental (not intellectual!) diversion to the temperamental diversion of the adventure tale, the difference between chess and auction, one might say. Mystery stories of a more sober (not solemn!) nature are being very well received; in particular—though as corollary to an increased demand for "solid reading" in this department—novels of psychical mystery.

Humorous fiction has an excellent market, and also that conscientiously humorless product known as the "glad" story.

As for sensational sex fiction, I find difficulty in composing for the utterance of our Midville, Idaho, authority such diverse reports as have arrived from Midville, Minnesota: "Sex fiction, we are happy to say, is practically dead"; and from Midville, New York: "Demand as usual very good." Is Manhattan really so much more ungirt in its tastes than Minneapolis, or do our authorities differ somewhat as to the meaning of the phrase "sensational sex fiction"? No doubt I should have explained in putting my question that what I meant by it was not at all the honest handling of those problems and situations of sex which concern any normal and serious art as much as they concern any normal human life and intelligence. I meant the kind of fiction that deliberately or helplessly plays with the hysteria or the squalor of sex.

On one matter, and that perhaps the most important, our original Midville bookseller may speak for the country as a whole. Everywhere in the bookshops as well as in the libraries, is noticeable a steady jacking-up of standards—a steady increase, at least, in the demand for the best type of realistic fiction. One notable thing (says Minneapolis) is that our novel buyers "want the English writers for the reason that they have literary merit". I wish Minneapolis might be able to introduce some of these customers, panting for excellence, to the considerable list of American novels of the last year which are quite as meritorious, in point of literary merit, as the imported article, and, being soundly indigenous, are also considerably fresher in theme. After all, little England has been worked, and worked over, by the British literary miner; and the truth is a good deal of the newest stuff is a sort of refining of the slag-heaps. It is well worth while, but inherently less interesting than that first striking into pay-ore by skilful hands which we may now witness on our own claim.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Finally, I think a fact emerges pretty clearly from our latest observations. More than one writer in recent numbers of THE BOOKMAN deplored the hard and fast distinction between fiction and non-fiction, in its character of contrast between the frivolous and the solid in literature. That distinction is being increasingly ignored by American readers. The present enlarged demand for novels of serious interpretation is a *part* of the marked increase in the demand for serious literature as a whole.

CURRENTS IN FRENCH LITERATURE

BY MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES

I

A BOOK which will certainly interest the cultivated American who is familiar not only with the high roads but with the bypaths of French literature, is called "Casanova d'Après Ses Mémoirs". Owing to the extraordinary and persistent indecency of so many passages in these, the most extraordinary recollections ever written by a civilized human being, Casanova as adventurer, philosopher, and acute observer of human affairs, is far too little known to the non-French and non-Italian reader. There have been several attempts at an English translation, but it is time that a really good life of so amazing a human should be undertaken by an authority in the eighteenth century. One remembers a charming article written by Arthur Symons on the manuscripts of Casanova—those manuscripts which were discovered almost by accident at Aix, and which still await complete publication.

Casanova's accounts of his captivity in the awful Venice prison of that time and of his marvelous escape, to a certain extent undoubtedly inspired Dumas when writing "Monte Cristo" —though Monte Cristo does not in any sense follow Casanova closely, in his wonderful adventures, I have sometimes doubted whether the book would have been written at all had not that strange adventurer lived. Casanova was born in 1725, and died in 1803. From earliest youth he wandered all over Europe, making long sojourns in every capital: being in turn man of fashion, diplomat, philosopher, writer, and charlatan. Whatever he chose to be at any particular moment was always "doubled", as the French say, with the eternal character of Don Juan. Casanova was never too busy, too anxious, too excited, too worried—and he was very often worried about money—to make love to every type of woman with whom chance brought him in contact. But he was much more than a libertine.

His memoirs contain excellent pen-portraits of Frederick the Great, of Catharine of Russia, of Voltaire, of Rousseau, and of Louis XV, with all of whom he was personally acquainted. Dowered with a prodigious memory, he wrote his extraordinary memoirs when quite an old man, while leading the dull life of librarian to a great Hungarian nobleman. The now famous work was not published till 1825, and then in a very incom-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plete form. The best edition is a German translation in ten volumes; but there is even now appearing in Paris what sets out to be a full and complete transcription of the manuscript.

II

I am told that certain French publishers are experiencing the same unpleasant after-war effects as their British colleagues—France, that is to say, no longer reads as she did when her sons, brothers, and lovers were in the trenches. On the other hand, there is keen curiosity concerning American and English books, and that is a very good thing. Too often your cultivated Frenchman knows nothing of foreign literature at all, and is likely to think it is not worth knowing. The only foreign literature which almost at once conquered the French imagination was the Russian. Tolstoi's first book, "Childhood", which was translated nearly seventy years ago, was appreciated in France before its great power was realized in the writer's own country. Since then Tolstoi's novels have sold by the hundred thousand in France, this being especially the case with "Anna Karénina", and that though it is generally published in two volumes. Three hundred and fifty thousand copies of "Resurrection" were also sold there.

There is little doubt that the Russian novelists owed their vogue in a measure to the fact that Turgenev (I think all writers still regard him as the greatest of them all) lived in France, and did everything in his power to introduce his fellow countrymen to the French public. As a child I very often saw "the gentle, white-haired giant". He had a charming country home within an easy walk of Malmaison, the château so closely associated with Napoleon and Josephine. By a tragic irony of fate the lovely lane where stood the entrance to Turgenev's villa was the scene, in 1870, of one of the most tragic episodes of the Franco-Prussian war—the last heroic sortie made by the doomed Parisian army. I remember hearing him say that he never went into the lane—which has deep fern-covered sides—without seeing, in imagination, the heaped-up bodies, and without seeming to hear the cries and groans of Prussians and Frenchmen mingling in a last death struggle.

Turgenev was the only foreign writer who became in a true sense intimate with all the great Frenchmen of his day. They admired him, and they loved him. Very painful was the shock when, after his death, some cruel biographer printed some letters which showed that he held certain of the French authors who had loved him as a brother, rather cheap, both as men and as writers.

III

To any one familiar with the literary worlds of Paris and of London there was much that was suggestive of thought and of interest in Frank Swinnerton's amusing article on "Novelist-baiting" in the June BOOKMAN. Paris is a far more literary city than is London. You would be hard put to it to find any educated Parisian who would confess as readily as do many educated Englishmen that he was "too busy" to read. As to the actual people engaged in writing books, it would be difficult to imagine worlds more different than are the French literary world and its English counterpart! Before the war there were in Paris a great number of periodicals—of which perhaps the most notable and the best was the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Mercure de France"—brought out in the interests of pure literature and of pure literature alone. But none of them were widely read, and their readers—with scarcely an exception—were themselves literary men. The French have always delighted in fine and mordant criticism, but one may say without fear of contradiction that there is in France nothing even approximating the novelist-baiting which Mr. Swinnerton tells us goes on in England. For one thing the French critic *prefers to admire rather than to decry.* He does not care to waste his time in "downing" bad work. How far is that from being the case in England? Every British critic should have over his writing-table, in letters of fire, the old saying, "Comparisons are odious". The French critic requires no such reminder; very, very seldom does he feel inclined to compare the work of, say in the past, George Sand and Zola; in the present, Marcelle Tinayre and Barbusse.

Even so, it must be admitted that it is far harder for a new writer to make his way in France than it is in England. The ordinary French reader is not catered for either by a public or by a circulating library. In the large, historic town of Rouen, where the writer made a sojourn of a month last autumn, she found that there was but one *cabinet de lecture!* The library was housed in a very small, stuffy shop, where a very fair selection of standard novels and historical memoirs could be hired for twopence a volume. But the *cabinet de lecture* was open from eight in the morning till nine at night, and always, at whatever hour one went there, one found the pleasant, well-read proprietress, an elderly lady eager to advise would-be readers as to the quality, and even the morality, of the works on her shelves! The little shop was almost always crowded, and with a most varied company of clients, men and women of all classes, and of almost every allied nation—for it was just after the armistice! I have seen, jostling each other, a humble *piou-piou* and a staff officer, each equally keen to take away a pile of the curious-looking newspaper-covered volumes. It must be regretfully admitted that every volume in this *cabinet de lecture* was very, very dirty; in some cases the book had literally been read to tatters, and so was almost in pieces. Yet what was really striking was the high level of literary quality in the books provided there. The manuscript catalogues would have compared very favorably with the grand, printed lists provided by the fine circulating libraries in a prosperous English country town. The books might be shabby and dirty, but there was practically no rubbish on the plain deal book-shelves; and the proprietress took the greatest trouble when buying a new volume—she naturally bought as few as possible—to get the very best. Thus she had the pick of the war books, and had herself read and enjoyed them all. In Paris itself the name of only one good circulating library springs to the mind; that is the famous Bibliothèque Cardinale on the left side of the Seine.

It is tucked away modestly in a corner of the beautiful Place St. Sulpice, within a stone's throw of the Luxembourg Gardens. Every intelligent Frenchman and Frenchwoman likes, now and again, to *buy* a book, and if the book is good it is ultimately put in a fine binding. If the book disappoints, it is sold; a vast trade is done in second-hand books not only along the Paris quays (where the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

writer once bought for a few cents a first edition of Robert Browning's poems with a dedication, in the poet's handwriting, to Victor Hugo) but also in many a humble side-street.

To return to the young French novelist. If he is regarded as extraordinarily good, as was, say, Pierre Loti, his publisher may take just a little trouble to bring him to the notice of the already well-known writers of the day. As to getting in touch with the half-dozen critics whose word carries weight, the ordinary new novelist's only chance of doing that is, as I said in a former article, to *call in person with his book in his hand* on the great man, who may or may not receive him graciously. Much too often the unknown French novelist has to pay for the publication of his first book. It was a bad day for French literature, and especially for the commencing author, when the price of French novels was reduced from round about eight to ten francs to three and one-half francs a volume. The utmost even a very "big seller" can hope to make nowadays out of each copy of his book is seventy centimes (fourteen cents). At one time Zola made a yearly income of three hundred thousand francs. It may be doubted if any French writer now living makes even half that income, unless he has turned his attention—as all the more brilliant novelists do as a matter of course—to the theatre. I remember being told that Madame Marcelle Tinayre made out of her famous novel "La Maison du Poilu" twenty thousand francs. It may be confidently asserted that had she had the same success in England and America, her monetary reward would have been at least ten times as great—indeed probably more.

IV

Those who are at all interested in literary Belgium—and of course Belgium has long had a fine and distinguished literature of her own—will be much attracted and fascinated by a book called "Les Premiers Romanciers Nationaux de Belgique", by Maurice des Ombiaux. The writer is himself a novelist and critic, and in this volume he gives a most interesting and brilliant analysis of the romantic and poetical writings of Rodenbach, Demolder, Lemonnier, Eckhoud, and, last not least, Verhaeren. I vividly remember Rodenbach's sudden appearance in French literary society. He was a most attractive human being as well as a delightful poet, and his beautiful volume, "Bruges-la-Morte", was hailed with the greatest enthusiasm by the leading Parisian critics. In those days Maeterlinck was still unknown. Rodenbach died prematurely, depriving his country of a writer who might have attained, as Maeterlinck has attained, a world-wide reputation. . . . Apropos of Maeterlinck, I hear he is devoting himself more and more to a curious kind of romantic and idealistic spiritualism. It absorbs his mind and seems likely to color all his future work.

Up to the present time twelve thousand books, articles, and engravings have been published in France concerning the Great War, and it is claimed that the most complete war library is to be found not in Paris as one might expect, but at Lyons. Apropos of books on the war, an amusing work, which has its absurd as well as its interesting side, is called "Les Fausses Nouvelles de la Grande Guerre". As the title implies, it is a record of all the untrue rumors and stories which crystallized round

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

each striking event and even episode of the four years' conflict. The most extraordinary example of "false news" was, as most of us remember, the supposed passage through England of a huge Russian army in August of 1914. It is said that the rumor was first started deliberately by Lord Kitchener in order that he might learn through his secret agents in Berlin, how soon a circumstantial story of the kind would reach the enemy. Another explanation is that a telegram was sent mentioning "two million Russians", the Russians in question being eggs! Yet a third explanation is that certain troops, passing through London, when asked where they came from answered in pure Scotch doric, "Ross-shire", and that this was translated by their Cockney questioners into Russia. The first explanation is probably the truest.

V

At last we have a really delightful prewar type of book in "La Vie Littéraire Sous Louis Philippe". We are offered new unpublished letters of Alfred de Musset, George Sand, Sainte-Beuve, Mérimée, and so on. Curiously few volumes have been published concerning the social and literary side of the reign of the cunning old bourgeois sovereign who was to be the last king of France, though the rise of the great romantic writers took place just before the revolution, which put an end forever to the old régime. Louis Philippe was nothing if not respectable; he looked very askance at romance: and though Victor Hugo, by sheer mental power, took a great place in the political life of the time, his fellow romantics were frowned upon and discouraged as far as was possible. You may seek in vain in the Paris newspapers of the day for any reference to the men and to the one woman who, then all living and writing and loving, became immortal.

Apropos of that wonderful band known as the romantics, perhaps the most remarkable thing about them was their staying power. Staying power is one of the greatest assets a human being can possess, and that whether he be military or naval commander, politician, or novelist. Many a man who might have attained fame seems to slacken in his endeavor after he has performed one or two striking actions, defeated a rival, or written a couple of fine books. On the other hand, many a mediocre human being has attained success simply because he has shown himself possessed of the power of "sticking it out".

Two extraordinary examples leap to the mind when considering this question—the one is Dumas Père, the other, of course, is Victor Hugo. Hugo was the superman of art. He began writing as a boy and he ended, as an old man, with his beautiful "Art of Being a Grandfather". The quality of his work never degenerated; it never became poor or thin; and he seemed equally at home in every branch of his art—as poet, dramatist, and novelist he was supreme.

There is no one to compare with those two great giants in the modern world of French writers; yet one or two of them stand out, owing to their power of continuous work. I am especially thinking of Marcel Prévost, who wrote perhaps the greatest *livre à scandale* of his generation in "Demi Vierges", and who has been successful with almost every type of writing which he cared to try. Personally I place very high his first book—the comparatively little known "Scorpion", one of the most powerful

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human studies written in our time. Prévost was known as a careful and distinguished, though not as a powerful, writer when "Demi Vierges" burst on the world as a serial in a monthly revue edited by the then young Henri de Rothschild. Five hundred thousand copies of the story were sold in book form.

Marcel Prévost is one of the few French writers of today who knows London well; for as a young man he acted as London correspondent for a big Paris paper. I met him soon after his first great success, and found him a most interesting man, absorbed in literature, and with a sane and generous judgment. He told me that though he carefully studied his backgrounds from life, his plots were wholly imaginary. At that time very short novels were the fashion, but Prévost remarked that from his point of view no serious novel could be written under three hundred pages. Like most imaginative writers, he works in the morning, never for more than two and a half hours; and a book takes him, roughly, from five to ten months to write. He writes every sentence at least twice over—sometimes rewrites a book from beginning to end. I was surprised to learn that his favorite among his own books was "Le Jardin Secret", a painful conjugal study of married life, in which the whole action is spread over only three days.

A GARDEN WALL

BY DAVID MORTON

THE Roman wall was not more grave than this,
That has no league at all with great affairs,
That knows no ruder hands than clematis,
No louder blasts than blowing April airs.
Yet, with a gray solemnity it broods,
Above the walk where simple folk go past,
And in its crannies keeps their transient moods,
Holding their careless words unto the last.

The rains of summer, and the creeping vine
That season after season clings in trust,
And shivered poppies red as Roman wine,—
These things at last will haunt its crumbled dust—
Not dreams of empires shattered where they lie,
But children's laughter, birds, and bits of sky.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

How it Feels to be the Wife of a Humorist

HUMORISTS should not be allowed to marry, unless of course they are female humorists. Then they will have to marry in order to become widows and mothers-in-law. Without mothers-in-law, naturally humor would perish. The first humorist of all was Cain, because he was the first man to have a mother-in-law. (I have never been able to understand where Cain got his wife. We are expressly given to understand that things started with Adam and Eve. These worthy people had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain, who was also the first bolshevik, slew Abel; a little later he committed matrimony. But where did his wife come from, unless he married the serpent?)

Adam, at any rate, was never tempted to commit bigamy—the penalty for which, my husband says, is two mothers-in-law. As for widows, "The Letters of a Self-Made Widow" is the most humorous book I ever read.

I am the wife, and hope some day to be the widow, of a well-known humorist—well known by me; only superficially known by the public that smiles at his whims. Of course I knew when we were betrothed that he had a sprightly wit; but I never dreamed that within a few years of our marriage he would give up his business and take to professional joking. The divorce laws being what they are, it is up to me to grin and bear it—*Lohengrin* and bear it, as the irreverent man said to me as we knelt at the altar to the strains of that immortal march. It was at that moment that I suspected the worst.

It is true that his profession is profitable. We live in a comfortable suburb where serious-minded people struggle with snowdrifts and vacuum cleaners; my husband's best known book, "Confessions of a Shrimp", has sold over a hundred thousand copies, and the royalties are still coming in. But the horrors of being a humorist's wife cannot be compensated by any amount of mere prosperity.

My friends say to me, "I suppose he keeps you laughing all the time? How delightful it must be to live with such a man!" Must I tell the harsh truth?

At breakfast time the famous droll comes down with a face as long as a silk stocking. He mumbles over his coffee, buries his face in the paper, and jots down on his cuff notes of events in the news that have meat in them for funny paragraphs. He then looks as much as possible like a sexton before a busy day in the cemetery. He runs a daily humorous column in an evening newspaper, and if those who praise his lighthearted comments on affairs of the day knew how he fidgets about the house every morning when he is getting ready to write his stuff for the next day, they would weep as they read. His usual remark is that his job is the hardest in the world, and he wishes he were a mattress tester in a feather-bed factory. Every now and then he leaps up from the typewriter and comes pounding in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to read something to me. If I think it's funny, he says my critical sense isn't developed enough to be any help to him; if I think it's stupid, he growls that I have no appreciation. And he is so grossly spoiled by the lunatic public that no matter how badly he behaves it is excused on the ground of whimsical eccentricity. When people come to call, if he is bored he yawns in their faces; and they take me aside to comment on his delightful originality. When he lectures to women's clubs they gush over him so that I find him unbearable for days afterward.

Very often I wish I had married an undertaker. As far as I have had opportunity to observe them, undertakers and embalmers are a cheerful, high-spirited lot of men. Their trade brings them into touch with grave matters (I meant no pun) but in private life they doff the smilax and don the smile by reaction. But the professional humorist, who has to be funny for a living, soon learns to hate himself heartily. When he comes home from a convention of the American Press Humorists I have to apply hot compresses to his feet and read Bœthius's "Consolations of Philosophy" aloud in a darkened room. A little vinegar diluted in ice water and sipped through a straw, is also helpful. But most trying are the times when some sweet voiced lady coos through the telephone: "Your husband has *such* a sweet sense of humor, won't he come and give a reading for our Red Cross society? We do *so* want to hear him read some of his laughable things while we sew for the Soviets." Once he went to such a meeting, and read them "The Fall of the House of Usher", telling them it was his own. They laughed bitterly, and vowed it was the most entertaining thing they had ever heard. Afterward one of the ladies said that they shouldn't have laughed at such a morbid story; so when he played a return engagement for them and read some of his wittiest pieces, such as "Cupid in Splints" and "Adam's Ribald Rib", they sat perfectly silent and whispered to each other, "Why is he so sardonic?" That night he came home in a frenzy, and I locked myself in the cellar while he wrote "The Sardonic Sardine" which has since been translated into fifteen languages and the Gaelic.

I do not know that I can altogether blame him for some of his moroseness, for certainly the professional humorist faces many withering experiences. Tradesmen send him samples of their wares (or underwears) with letters such as this: "Dear Sir: Please try on our closed-crotch, triple-reinforced, saddle-seat, Italian dimity union suit, and if you like same mention in your column and price which is $1.95." College presidents pursue him with honorary degrees. Life insurance companies refuse him as a bad risk because a humorist has so many enemies. Everywhere he goes it is impressed upon him that he is expected sooner or later to say something amusing. No wonder that when he comes home he buzzes like a hornet.

But no matter how many excuses there may be, that does not make it any easier for me to endure his crotchets. Think of keeping house for a man who insists on having artichokes for breakfast, because, he says, they amuse him. A burglar stole our silver punch-bowl, and he let him off without prosecution because he had a humorous face. When the garage caught fire, he let it burn down without attempting to turn in an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alarm because one of our neighbors, whom he dislikes, kept his lawnmower there. He sat at the window roaring with laughter because, as he said, it was such a joke on Jones. Imagine how embarrassing it is for me when he sends telegrams every now and then to the minister, whose wife is a good friend of mine, saying: "Bill Shamble has case of Scotch in his cellar when can you join us Harry". When the minister has preached a specially dull sermon, he sends him a postal card with a picture of a church in some other city, and writes underneath it, "There is a very fine church in Scranton." Or sends the Chinese laundryman a box of chocolate creams by parcel post because "it will surprise him". Or insists on talking to our colored chauffeur about "the last lynching we had on our street".

One of his remarks is, "Blessed are the wheezemakers, for they inherit the mirth." But certainly their wives don't inherit much of it.

—ANN DANTE

The Advantage of Not Being Educated

EVEN for minds naturally distinguished for courage, capacity, and persistence, it is a laborious process to acquire an education. The result is highly esteemed by the majority. Certainly nobody would go through so much trouble without the conviction that a corresponding benefit has been achieved. No one has thought to question the value of an education. Perhaps the strongest point in its favor is the popular delusion that it is necessary in order to acquire a good living.

In addition to giving one an increased earning power, an education is believed to contribute to the sum total of one's happiness. Educated people are declared to derive much benefit and satisfaction from the use of their equipment. Education not only enables them to maintain themselves, but to pass their time profitably in uplifting intellectual pastimes.

At one time I acquired an obstinate ambition to get an education and strove earnestly for this object. Later, however, I became so much interested in other matters that I gradually relinquished my hope. The natural shame that I felt over my defect was gradually replaced by a feeling of proper humility, which shaded itself into a settled tranquillity in the relinquishment of something that I have come to realize is much more unimportant than it seems.

For one thing, ignorance is a great power in itself. There is no argument with an ignorant person. You cannot get at him. His very blindness fortifies him against any advance. The divine serenity of ignorance is a fundamental fact.

Educated people are obliged to cultivate their memories in order to retain what they have gained. Thus they acquire a reputation for their stock of learning, which is likely at any moment to be upset by someone who knows a little more. If they associate with people who know less, this tends to make them deteriorate. If they associate with those who know more, they are at a constant disadvantage.

When I gave up the idea of being educated, I thought I would just become cultured and let it go at that. But being cultured is a great strain. One must always maintain one's pose. To relax into an unwitting vulgarity is fatal. One misstep will undo the work of years.

I remember distinctly the shock I

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had when I was one day accused of not being educated. Up to that moment I had fondly believed that I was. When I finally faced the situation and discovered that I was not, I determined to make the best of it. Since then I have had no trouble.

All my life I have been surrounded by educated people. They no longer disturb me. Indeed I find them very useful. They are quite essential to my purpose. I have but shamelessly to confess my ignorance and they flock to help me. It was at first hard to do this but now it is second nature. Generally, when you want people to perform any service for you, some sort of payment is exacted. But this is not true in the case of educated people, for the reason that the pride they take in showing you that they know more than you do inspires them to the fullest accomplishment. They will work like mad to outrival one another in your esteem—and this, strange to say, no matter how ignorant you are in their eyes. The other day I saw something in French that interested me—I can scarcely tell why. I caught a strange-looking word here and there—among a mess of others that appealed to my primitive curiosity. I shamelessly bared my ignorance and a dozen or more immediately sprang to the rescue. It appeared to me as if everyone I knew had an intimate acquaintance with French. In a short time they laid before me the combined result and I got what I wanted merely for the asking. Knowing that I frankly had nothing to parade, their incipient contempt for me had given way to that delightful sympathy for the under dog which appears to be inherent in every human breast.

Once I essayed to read the newspapers with some diligence, thereby spending much needless time. I do so no longer. I have taken on a few friends who pride themselves upon their intimate knowledge of world affairs. They not only tell me everything freely, but if anyone among them inadvertently makes a misstatement, this is shortly corrected by another. My memory is naturally poor, but this is easily remedied by the fact that my friends voluntarily combine to drum into me the essentials. I sit still and press the pride of their intentions, and they do the rest.

Educated people, being in constant competition, are constantly striving to acquire more education. My heart goes out to them. Poor souls, they never read for pleasure, but for profit. But the only profit they really get is the fear that someone else may know more than they do.

Having slowly, but I believe successfully, gotten rid of this absurd feeling, I have all the time in the world. Everybody is working for me. Having nothing to lose, I can do exactly as I please. It releases the time to think—time that other people are furiously burning up in order to acquire or keep their educations.

The pleasure I get out of reading is something incalculable, because, having no reputation to sustain and no information to gather, I read only for pleasure. As soon as any author fails to interest me, I drop him. I can skip him at any point. If I don't like the way he writes, but want to know how the book comes out, I have but to signal to some educated friend who has read him, and he takes infinite pleasure in telling me the plot. Furthermore, I do not even have to depend upon myself to make the effort to provide interesting things to read. I go over the list of educated friends I

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

know and select those who are most capable of providing me with what I want. They have nothing to gain. They fully realize that I am utterly hopeless. Yet they take an intense interest in my wretched condition. And they never bore me. My very incapacity to follow them beyond a certain point—the point of my own interest—always stops them in time.

As for the severely practical part, that of course is important. It is universally assumed that an education is essential in order to make a living, but I do not find it so. Here other people—as in literary matters—are constantly on hand to pull me through. I am almost ashamed at times to see them labor so hard over me. But they seem to enjoy it. I should be churlish to begrudge them this one comfort. I have slowly acquired a profession that supports me admirably, enabling me to wear clothes and absorb real food, the work being done by others. My mistakes are continuous and disgraceful, but the educated experts at hand correct them almost instantly, and always shield me from the consequences. They know how little I know, but they dig trenches around me to keep others from finding it out. If any outsider inadvertently finds it out, he immediately joins the home guard. I am abominably careless, but someone sorts my papers. I once wrote letters, but they were so bad that others took pity on me. Even my mail is now repeated to me by a beautiful woman with a cultivated voice, who never mispronounces. That is, she says she doesn't, and I am ready to believe anything she says. I know nothing about a motor, except to turn on the switch and start it and move the handle back and forth so that the thing will carry me about. Yet if it stops anywhere, or the tires deflate—I believe that is the term I have heard used,—I have but to confess my ignorance to passing strangers and they work like fury to get me going again. Suppose I should try to impress them with the fact that I knew something? They would scorn me.

I account for my moderate but quite sufficient success, by the fact that, not being educated, I have no prejudices. I tolerate everyone, because anyone at any moment may save me from some hideous fate. And they always do. I must say for them that in this respect educated people are reliable. There are so many of them that what one lacks the other supplies. Also, there is no danger of being found out, because they all know already just what I am. I have absolutely nothing to conceal.

Then again, the leisure I obtain from not being educated enables me to be fairly agreeable. The only real truth I have been able to gather from all my lack of education is that if you are fairly agreeable, people like to work for you. They seem somehow to feel that it is essential that you should be maintained.

Even this article was inspired by an educated man who told me one day that he had been on the verge of advising me to acquire an education, until upon reflection he suddenly sensed my little game. I am puzzled that, being educated, he should have made this simple discovery. But then educated people are occasionally intelligent.

—THOMAS L. MASSON

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TEACHING PATRIOTISM THROUGH BOOKS

BY HENRY LITCHFIELD WEST

THE war and its outcome have developed what may be called a renaissance of patriotic teaching. There is a wider and deeper interest in things pertaining to our government; a more earnest desire to implant patriotic impulses in the minds of children and adults; a realization that if American ideals and principles are to be preserved, a foundation of intelligent patriotism must be wisely laid. Men and women of vision realize more than ever before that national welfare depends upon a citizenship thoroughly acquainted with the fundamentals of constitutional liberty. This point of view has never been entirely lacking. The vital difference between the past and the present, however, lies in the fact that there is now universal appreciation of a necessity which vitally concerns the perpetuity of our institutions.

In considering how patriotism shall be taught we are met by a remarkable situation. We have been a nation for much more than a century; and our public schools have been our proud boast from almost the very first days of our national existence. Educators have given much thought and study to the details of curricula—have carefully figured out, in fact, how much time should be devoted to reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, grammar, geography, history and all the other factors which comprise tuition. One would think that an equal amount of care would have been given to the problem of teaching patriotism. On the contrary, according to a statement made by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart of Harvard University—an educator of recognized eminence—this vital matter has been almost entirely ignored. Although patriotism is the foundation of our national life, its inculcation has apparently been regarded by educators as something which could take care of itself. In a letter addressed to over two hundred and fifty prominent educators, relative to what is known as the Lawrence Plan for Education in Citizenship, Professor Hart makes the following statements:

> We are all thoroughly agreed that what America most needs to-day is a thorough comprehension of the duties and obligations of each and every American citizen. There has been a great deal of talk of teaching Americanism, not only in our schools, but in every workshop and factory in the land. A great many people are anxious to teach Americanism, but very few know exactly what to teach. They have never thought out for themselves the principles of American citizenship and they have rarely seen them in print, or heard them from the platform.
>
> All the data that we have at present for a description or definition of the American spirit consists of casual utterances of our leaders in their speeches or their writings. We believe there has been, previous to our attempt, no systematic expression of what American citizenship means. In bringing out these principles, therefore, we have been practically breaking new ground.

It is difficult to accept this assertion as being literally true. Perhaps there has been no universal rule or formula for the teaching of patriotism, but patriotic impulse has certainly not been lacking in the hearts of men and women intrusted with the duty of education. If this were not the case, we would be at a loss to account for ap-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parent facts. One of the most severe strains ever placed upon national patriotism was the enactment and enforcement of the selective conscription act, but the spontaneous and orderly response of millions of young men to the requirements of that statute demonstrated the loyalty of American citizenship. These young men may have imbibed patriotism with their mothers' milk, which is the best way to absorb it, but they also learned its principles in school and college and from teachers who fully realized their responsibility in the making of good citizens. For generations, patriotic recitations like "Breathes there a man with soul so dead", have been spoken from school platforms, while for many years it has been the custom for pupils to recite a pledge to the flag. This simple ceremony has stimulated patriotism and has created a feeling of loyalty not easily to be eradicated from the youthful mind.

The question whether patriotism can be taught through books is not to be lightly answered with a mere affirmative or negative. It is all-embracing. Its consideration relates to environment, intelligence, emotional temperament, and even enters the domain of metaphysics. These numerous angles prove the inquiry to be worthy of serious attention, especially at the present time, when Bolshevism is stalking red-handed through the world; and loud-mouthed orators—not all of foreign birth—are openly advocating antagonism to law and order, and the overthrow of American institutions. If the nation is to survive, respect for American ideals, based upon knowledge, must be implanted in the minds of those who are destined to become voting citizens. Our national future is in the hands of the children of this and coming generations. If they are not well-grounded in patriotism our institutions are resting only on shifting sands, and will be overturned by some fierce gust of passion or discontent.

It is necessary, first of all, to express in concrete forms the nature of the idealistic thing which we call patriotism. The dictionaries do not afford us much assistance, for the definitions vary. In the main, however, the lexicographers agree that patriotism means devotion to one's country, but the simple acceptance of this general statement does not wholly suffice. Admitting that the men or women who willingly and unselfishly sacrifice their lives for their country exemplify patriotic devotion in the highest degree, we still have innumerable phases to consider. For instance, when the American flag is thrown upon a screen at a moving-picture theatre, a certain proportion of the audience involuntarily and heartily applaud. There can be no question that these persons are patriotic, but can those who do not participate in the demonstration be characterized as unpatriotic? The answer must be in the negative. The silent ones may be just as good citizens, and may be, in fact, more conscientiously patriotic than their emotional companions. There is undemonstrative, as well as demonstrative, patriotism; but the ultima thule of all patriotic effort ought to be the certainty that all persons are, deep down in their hearts, intensely devoted to their country.

Is this result to be attained by education and, if so, what course should be pursued? It would seem as if a fact ought to be stated instead of a question asked; in other words, after a century's experience, methods and results should be confidently pre-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sented. We have the authority of Professor Hart, however, that "there has been no systematic expression of what American citizenship means"; the logical inference being that educators have regarded patriotism—although it is the very life of our national being—as something outside of the domain of constructive education. Without conceding that the teaching of patriotism has been thus sadly neglected, and suspecting that Professor Hart has indulged in exaggeration in order to give force to his advocacy of the so-called Lawrence Plan, it is worth while to examine how the new ground to which he refers is to be broken, because any effort to place the teaching of patriotism upon a higher and more effective plane is too important to be ignored.

The aims and principles of the plan, as set forth in a pamphlet by John J. Mahoney, principal of the State Normal School, at Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Henry Harmon Chamberlin of Worcester, Massachusetts, are not marked by originality. When it is stated, for example, that "the Lawrence Plan was born of our belief that every schoolboy and schoolgirl in the country ought to know and appreciate the privileges and duties of being a good American", and that "we aim to teach the sacrifices and achievements of our forefathers in founding our democracy, to point out the promise of our future and its perils, and to warn of the grave menace to democracy which confronts us today", we cannot escape the conviction that these aims and beliefs are not confined to the authors of the pamphlet but, on the contrary, are quite general. Equally obvious is a lengthy definitive paragraph, explaining that education is not merely a matter of attendance upon school; and that the main purpose of the public schools is to keep the republic safe by maintaining the needed supply of intelligent, thoughtful, self-sacrificing pupils.

The statements made in the pamphlet are so remarkable in their revelations that we do not know whether to laugh or cry. "History, for example", it says, "will be taught not merely to impart the facts of history, but to make every American boy and girl believe and understand the worth of being free." If this is not the way history has been taught in the past, we weep over years of wasted effort in our educational institutions; while if the advocates of the Lawrence Plan are merely approaching an established system with what Charles Lamb would call the emotions of a new discoverer, we cannot fail to be amused. The feeling in relation to civics is similar. Civics is to be taught in the Lawrence Plan "not merely through the medium of text-books, but by raising the spirit of devotion to the community—in the school, in the home, in the neighborhood; in business, in all the duties of life". If the inculcation of this spirit has been lacking in the multitude of civics classes which have come and gone with the passing of years, then they have failed in the most essential reason for their existence. When it is further declared that arithmetic, geography, science, and music are to be "vitalized and Americanized", we wish that the writers of the pamphlet had been more explicit; while the statement that "hygiene, physiology, and physical training can be made to rouse a truly American enthusiasm for health and vigor" seems superfluous. This has been the object and the result of physical training ever since it was introduced into the schools.

At the same time, the so-called Law-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rence Plan has its value because it illustrates the praiseworthy tendency of the times. Teaching patriotism is now a serious undertaking. It is being taught, not alone through books, but through socialized recitations, which encourage independent and original thought on the part of the pupil; through participation by pupils in school affairs, so as to inculcate the principles of democracy in their daily experience; and through the motivation of studies—for "motivation" is one of the most popular words of the educators—by giving to the lessons a personal and vital interest. A more thorough knowledge of the principles of our government is thus being imparted. The wisdom of this course is self-evident, because in the last analysis, good citizens are patriotic, or vice versa. It is probable that, in the future, we shall talk less of teaching patriotism and more of teaching good citizenship, for the reason that patriotism is an emotion and citizenship is a practice. It is easy enough to teach that two and two make four, or c-a-t spells *cat*, or that Washington is the capital of the United States, or, in the more advanced classes, that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. These are direct and positive facts, capable of only one interpretation. The problem is to reduce patriotism, which is very largely a mental state, to terms which are concrete. It is greatly to be regretted that one of the promises of the sponsors of the Lawrence Plan—that it would result in the presentation of a system which would be universally applicable—has not yet been redeemed.

In a book entitled "Our Schools in Wartime—and After" by Dr. Arthur D. Dean, professor of vocational education, Teachers' College, Columbia University, the statement is made that "out of the war we are going to have a new spirit and method in education". What is this new spirit and method and where are we to look for its manifestation? The answer to this question is not in Dr. Dean's volume. It is true that he aims to point out new responsibilities and new opportunities for making schools of more service in the community life, but he does not present a definite program for reconstruction. Instead, we find four pages of sentences followed up by interrogation marks, a few examples being as follows:

> What of the contribution of the schools after the war? Should not the schools then center their aims and methods on making democracy safe for the world?
>
> If the people themselves are to be masters, must they not be provided with an education for making mastership?
>
> Is it not well for us to examine our present schools to determine whether they are making a democracy which will be safe for the world?
>
> Have we a system of education which actually gives an opportunity for every child to make the most of himself?
>
> What has been done in the way of fulfilling the national obligation to teach the stranger within our gates our language, and the principles and forms of our civic life?
>
> Are the disciplinary methods of the teachers and the general internal management of the schools such as will develop among pupils a democracy which is safe even in the schoolroom?

With Professor Hart asserting that no system of teaching patriotism now exists; with Professor Dean presenting a multitude of unanswered questions as the summary of his ideas; and with $5,000 expended for a year's experiment at Lawrence without producing a program which can be applied in tangible manner to other localities, it would seem as if the educators themselves had not yet solved the problem of teaching patriotism.

There is no occasion, however, for pessimism. Constructive minds are

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at work. A new volume by Grace A. Turkington, entitled "My Country: A text-book in civics and patriotism for young Americans", which has been inspired by "a desire to meet the needs of to-day", makes a strong appeal because of its practical value. It clothes the dry bones of civics with flesh and blood and makes the study a vital, living thing. It presents and suggests facts and methods whereby the mind of the child can be trained in the direction of good citizenship. Abandoning entirely all rhetorical and platitudinous appeals for patriotism, it tells the pupil that the man who cheats a city is as venal as the burglar who robs a bank; that the official who fails to properly administer his public trust ought not to be retained in office; and that civic indifference is a neglect of the highest obligation of citizenship.

Other books along the same lines, just published, are of equal importance. "A Course in Citizenship and Patriotism" has for its theme the development of citizenship governed by good-will and manifested through service; while "Civics for New Americans" is a text-book for the foreign-born newcomer who wishes to understand thoroughly the government of the land of his adoption. These are books that will improve municipal administration everywhere, elevate the personnel of city, state, and national legislatures to a higher plane; and, what is most important, ultimately lessen the present unduly large proportion of non-voters. Patriotism will undoubtedly be more highly developed when our citizenship is made more perfect and when the administrators of government are inspired by the highest ideals. It is not too much to say that this result can be achieved. The sporadic efforts of the past are now being made universal, and the impulse to the movement which is the direct outcome of the war is worth all the cost of that great struggle.

One of the most encouraging signs of the times is an awakened interest in the Constitution of the United States. On this subject I can speak with definite knowledge. It occurred to me that if I could transform the forbidding technicalities of the Constitution into something easily learned, the experiment might result in a greater familiarity with the document on the part of those to whom its principles and ideals were either totally unknown or vaguely understood. The result was the writing and publication of "A Catechism of the Constitution of the United States", in which the provisions of our great charter of liberty were set forth in the familiar, simple form of questions and answers. The "Catechism" was instantly and tremendously successful. When Dr. Frank Crane used it as a topic for one of his syndicated editorials, over 4,500 individual letters making requests for copies were received by the organization which issued the pamphlet. It has gone into innumerable high and grade schools and is proving most effective in naturalization classes. It is significant and encouraging to note that hundreds of requests were received from children whose parents are of foreign birth, while the letters from adult aliens who desired to become citizens were almost pathetic in their crudely expressed appreciation of a method which afforded them their first opportunity to learn the Constitution. In fact, the demand has been so great that nearly 100,000 copies have already been printed and distributed, including an edition of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

10,000 in Yiddish. This experience with the "Catechism" demonstrates that people are really anxious to become intelligently patriotic; and surely there can be no more effective way of combating Bolshevism than by laying a broad foundation of knowledge concerning our constitutional government.

To return to the question of teaching patriotism through books, we find a striking analogy in the fact that religion is taught from the Bible. The circulation of the Bible is enormous. Last year the American Bible Society printed and distributed 4,000,000 copies in the United States alone. This society, with an annual endowment of only $75,000 spends from $750,000 to $900,000 each year for Bible distribution, the money being contributed by those who believe that they are aiding in moral development. In addition to this, there are approximately 180,000 ministers in the United States who are constantly preaching religion from Biblical texts. The result is that we are a Christian nation.

Unfortunately there is no Bible of Patriotism, unless it be our Constitution, and it is doubtful whether 4,000 copies of that document were printed and distributed last year. The ignorance regarding our Constitution is appalling and is not confined to the illiterate and the foreign-born. This is not surprising, because people cannot be expected to be familiar with something which is rarely brought to their attention. When the realization of popular ignorance and indifference is driven into the consciousness of men who are both patriotic and wealthy, and who must realize that patriotism is as essential to our national welfare as religion, there ought to be no lack of funds to inculcate patriotism through knowledge of the Constitution. Someone with authority and experience should write a Bible of Patriotism, laying down the golden rule of civic conduct and teaching political righteousness through parable and precept. The foundation of such a book would, of course, be the Constitution in its literal text, together with its presentation in the more digestible form of questions and answers; and it should also contain the Declaration of Independence and Lincoln's address at Gettysburg, which in this new Bible would be a parallel to the Sermon on the Mount. If, more than this, each one of the 180,000 ministers could be induced to frequently expound and elaborate a text from the Constitution, they could revolutionize the mental attitude of the country. As the circulation of the printed word must be supplemented by the spoken word, so it will not suffice merely to print and circulate the Constitution. It must be explained and taught, until it literally becomes as familiar as the Bible. Patriotism would then be a substantial part of our daily lives.

The value of the spoken word emphasizes the importance of the schoolteacher. Books play their part in the inculcation of patriotism but personal equation is, after all, the impelling force. It is the interpretation of "The Man Without a Country" which sinks deep into the youthful mind. It is what the teacher says which impresses the pupil, far more than the formal and cold type of the text-book. The federal Bureau of Education shows appreciation of this fact by placing in the hands of every teacher a vitalized plan for teaching civics; but the task of selecting teachers and the still more important duty of see-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing that patriotism is rightly taught, rests with each community. Thousands of teachers have done more to make patriotic citizens out of the children entrusted to their care than all the books ever written. They have been imbued with intense patriotism, with high ideals, with clear and accurate knowledge of American institutions and ideals, and they have imparted this knowledge to others. The stimulus which they have given toward national patriotism is beyond calculation. They need books and the children need books, to supply the foundation of intelligent patriotism, but it is not through books alone that the soul of the child is reached or the way of the foreign-born made easy. It is through the teachers, and upon them the future of our country depends.

Our Schools in Wartime—and After. By Arthur D. Dean. Ginn and Co.
My Country. By Grace A. Turkington. Ginn and Co.
A Course in Citizenship and Patriotism. Revised edition. By Ella Lyman Cabot, Fannie Fern Andrews, Fanny E. Coe, Mabel Hill, and Mary McSkimmon; introduction by William Howard Taft. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Civics for New Americans. By Mabel Hill and Philip Davis. Houghton Mifflin Co.
A Catechism of the Constitution of the United States. By Henry Litchfield West. National Security League.
The Liberty Reader. By Bernard M. Sheridan. Benjamin H. Sanborn and Co.
The American's Creed and Its Meaning. By Matthew Page Andrews. Doubleday Page and Co.

A BOOK-SHELF FOR THE MONTH

A PÆAN TO DR. VAN DYKE

By Maurice Francis Egan

IF anybody in this restless world keeps up the habit—the good old habit—of insisting on having a quiet hour every day (our friends, the English, no longer do it—they fill that quiet hour with tea)—let him put "The Valley of Vision" among his books of meditation. It is not a volume written down to anybody, or up to anybody, but it is a book for the lover of good technical style, as well as for the dreamer, the thinker, for the reader who delights in observing the spirit of life in its best manifestations; and among these best manifestations are the delicious ironies of life which Henry van Dyke catches as a boy with a net stops the butterflies. The prevalent vice of too many books today is that they cannot be read a second time; and the reflection of this vice is found in ourselves, that we have got out of the habit of reading anything a second time except a book of quotations. But one can read Henry van Dyke's "The Valley of Vision" many times.

"Why 'The *Valley* of Vision'?" is the question, to which the author answers: "The mountain-top is the place of outlook over the earth and the sea. But it is in the valley of suffering, endurance, and self-sacrifice that the deepest visions of the meaning of life come to us." The verbal expression of dreams, meditations, and observations admirably suits each theme. Take the "Antwerp Road: October, 1914"; it has all the delicacy and strength of a perfect etching. If it were written in French, it would alone have secured the author a place among the first of the stylists. Almost the same thing may be said of the exquisite "The Broken Soldier"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and "The Maid of France". They are as perfect in English as anything of de Maupassant is in French; and as clearly cut and sympathetic and human as Balzac's "Messe de l'Athée". There is, perhaps, more of a touch of Coppée than of de Maupassant—it is useless to make comparison with the English makers of this genre, for there is no other man writing in England or America who can dream and meditate and reveal his meditation and experiences through the veil of a poetic mist which cannot be defined in ordinary words. The influence of Novalis, of Jean Paul Richter, may explain it to the professional student of comparative literature; but, after all, nothing can really explain it except the unusual temperament of the author.

"The Hearing Ear" and "A Classic Instance" will probably appeal most to the reader of culture and common sense; and they ought to be put into pamphlets and served to the hysterical and thoughtless in all the states of our union that proposed to drive out of our higher schools the German language and the best German literature. If patriotism is sometimes the last refuge of scoundrels, patriotism often becomes a dangerous stimulant to the weak-minded and to those who desire to conceal their own lack of loyal convictions by the loudness of their shrieks. Upon the too-fervent iconoclasts Henry van Dyke pours a cooling stream in "The Hearing Ear". The dialogue among the three young men—American boys from the region of Philadelphia—in the dugout "somewhere in France", is done convincingly; it is life, movement, truth to nature itself, and quite as good as the few skilful strokes with which Henry van Dyke draws the interior of a habitation in the trenches, as such an interior has never been drawn before.

"Look here", said Phipps-Herrick, "you admit that modern education must be useful? Well, there won't be any more use for German, because we are going to shut Germany out of the international trades-union. She has betrayed the principles of the new era. We are going to boycott her."

"Won't that be rather difficult?" queried Mitchell, shaking his head. "Seventy or eighty million people—hard to shut them out of the world, eh?"

"Nonsense, dear Phil," drawled Rosenlaube; "it will be easy enough. But I don't agree with Phipps-Herrick about the reason or method. We are going to have a new era after the war. But it will not be a utilitarian age. It will be a return to beauty and form and culture—not with a 'k'. First of all, we are going to kill a great many Germans. Then we are going to Berlin to knock down all the ugly statues in the Sieges-Allee and smash the parvenu German Empire. Then we shall have a new age on classic lines. People will still use French and English and Italian because there is some beauty in those languages. But nobody outside of Germany will speak or read German. It is a barbarous tongue—shapeless and hideous—used by barbarians who gobble and snort when they talk. Sorry for Kant and Goethe and Heine and all that crowd, but their time is up; they've got to go out with their beastly language."

To which Mitchell, the man in the minority, replies:

"Why should I throw away something that has been useful to me, and may be again? Why forget the little German that I know and burn my Goethe and refuse to listen to Beethoven's music? I won't do it, that's all."

And he shows later that he was right. How he shows this—the description of the creeping of the three into No Man's Land is a living picture—leaves nothing more to be said. No further argument is needed; and it ought to shut the mouths of the Society for the Propagation of Obscurantism forever.

"A Classic Instance" begins with the assertion by Hardman, "lean, eager, absolute, a fanatic in modernity"; he has been brought up at Kiel—"the only place", he adds, "where they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

really understood metallurgy." Hardman not only represents the modern German spirit, but that reaction against beauty and the cultivation of the things of the spirit in favor of a mongrel efficiency which the tongues of the foolish, not speaking in German, are telling us we must learn from the Germans.

A prime quality of foolishness is its constant change from conservatism to radicalism; it knows no medium; no *juste milieu;* it will not wait for the pendulum to swing; it pushes it violently from right to left. Before this war that professional educator was cursed who did not bow his head in reverence to German philosophies, although Germany had become notoriously the least clear-thinking of nations; it had left clarity of thought with the French as a compensation for Alsace-Lorraine. And this lack of clarity, which was replaced by meticulous research, resulted in a perfection of the study of words and of outward forms which enabled the Germans to make great contributions to science, especially to philology. Nobody can deny this, and nobody ought to deny it. If we attempt to deny it now, we simply admit that before this war we were stupid sheep following a vicious bell-wether who deceived us; but let that pass. I shall not quote from "A Classic Instance". It ought to be read by the kind of people who refuse to read books that they do not own. It might even convert the more ignorant of the cultured from the fads of that New Era which they are beginning to acclaim today, with as little thought or intelligence as they acclaimed the divinity of Richard Strauss, and of Harnack, and of Sudermann and Hauptmann a few years ago. I regret that I may not have more space to point out, not to interpret—Henry van Dyke's purity of style and directness of thought needs no interpretation—but to emphasize the need of such a sane and beautiful book in times such as these when we are all rather puzzled, and need to have our attention drawn to the immortality of beauty, and the beauty of immortality.

The Valley of Vision. By Henry van Dyke. Charles Scribner's Sons.

DICKENS AND HIS FRIENDS

By Henry Litchfield West

A LABOR of love, extending over many years, has enabled Mr. Ley to collect, classify, and publish a wealth of information relating to the friends of Charles Dickens. His book is a monument to well directed and intelligent industry and enthusiasm. It presents a stage crowded with the notable people to whom Dickens wrote, with whom he talked, and among whom he lived; but so skilfully has Mr. Ley done his work that these people seem to be endowed, even in the printed pages, with flesh and blood and living souls. It is this fact which makes the volume more than a mere complement to Forster's "Life of Dickens". It is a distinctive contribution and is worthy of a niche in any library where Dickens holds a place of honor.

Inspired by a desire to show the magnetism of Dickens's personality, "which attracted to him so many of the brilliant men and women of the time, and won for him their wholehearted friendship", Mr. Ley has gathered from every conceivable source an immense amount of personal material, nearly all of which has a decided literary value. Even the trivialities are interesting because they illustrate some characteristic of Dick-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ens or of his friends. The latter, by the way, were almost as innumerable as the stars in heaven. It is doubtful whether any man was ever surrounded by such a circle; certainly no one ever left behind him a record of friendship so voluminous and convincing as the one which Mr. Ley has compiled.

No one can read the volume without being impressed, first of all, with the wonderful personnel of the Victorian era in which Dickens lived. Thackeray, Browning, Tennyson, Carlyle, Macready, Leigh Hunt, Douglas Jerrold, Bulwer Lytton, John Leech, Landor, Tom Hood, Wilkie Collins, Edmund Yates—with all these, and with a multitude of other men and women of distinction, Dickens enjoyed a friendship which was mutual; and while there is more or less of a tendency to make Dickens the sun around which the others revolved as lesser luminaries, Mr. Ley does not lack discrimination. For instance, when comparing Browning and Dickens, he says that "one was a cultured man and the other had no learning at all". He has also been judicial in the treatment of the episode in which Edmund Yates was the chief figure, and which led to the long estrangement between Thackeray and Dickens. The latter had interfered without warrant in a club quarrel between Thackeray and Yates, and Mr. Ley does not attempt to justify the course which Dickens pursued. It is pleasant to note that there was a reconciliation a few days before Thackeray died, because Thackeray had been a staunch friend of Dickens, had been a welcome visitor at his house, and having in some way made Dickens happy "a long way from home", had been given an autograph copy of "A Christmas Carol". This book was later purchased by Queen Victoria.

Mr. Ley's work is not confined to those whose names are "household words". There are chapters devoted to Mr. and Mrs. Watson, to whom "David Copperfield" was dedicated; to Thomas Noon Talfourd, whose name appears on the dedication page of "Pickwick"; to Baroness Burdett-Coutts, to whom a like honor was paid in connection with "Martin Chuzzlewit"; and to Lady Blessington, Mary Boyle, Clarkson Stanfield, "the best-loved friend Dickens ever had", and many others. These chapters, dealing with comparatively unknown persons, are full of interest and demonstrate the catholicity of the book. It is noteworthy that the "Dickens circle" consisted mainly of authors, artists, actors, and lawyers. "There is one class", says Mr. Ley, "that scarcely ever found a place within his circle. I mean the politicians." Dickens, it seems, "had a contempt for Parliament and its heroes". As a matter of fact, a political atmosphere would be utterly foreign to the book and would destroy the literary quality which is its charm.

It is not easy to withstand the temptation to present many of the incidents which reveal Dickens's character, and especially to reprint the details of his friendship with Irving, Holmes, Lowell, Longfellow, Emerson, and other American authors. His relations with these men were so cordial and their reception of him was so hearty and sincere, that it is difficult to understand why Dickens should have displayed so much spleen in his "American notes". There is reason to believe that he afterward felt that he had been unduly critical. Lord Macaulay, by the way, declined to review this book. "It seems to me to be on the whole a failure," he wrote, and he added that it was vulgar and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flippant, frivolous and dull. This is a case where Mr. Ley prints the fact as he finds it; another instance being the uncharitable criticisms uttered by the Reverend W. H. Brookfield, whose wife will always be remembered as the woman to whom Thackeray wrote some of the most delightful letters ever penned.

The book, as a whole, is worthy of all commendation. It appeals to every lover of Dickens; but its influence will not be confined to this narrow limit. The whole world will be richer and better for its splendid testimony to the existence of a circle of friendships more precious than gold could buy.

The Dickens Circle. By J. W. T. Ley. E. P. Dutton and Co.

THE STORY OF IRELAND

By Frank Dilnot

THE difficulty of all who desire to secure a perspective of the Irish question is to get before them a wide-visioned philosophic presentation of facts regarding the Irish people. Storms of prejudice are sweeping over multitudes who, while desiring to form a correct judgment, have little or no knowledge of essential points in the great controversy. Warre B. Wells has written a book which, while it is called "The Life of John Redmond", is in reality the clear-cut human story of Ireland—a story which will make the heart of every Irishman beat a little faster, and will at the same time be read with profit and without any resentment by every British opponent of the Sinn Feiners. Mr. Wells has accomplished a remarkable achievement which will give the cause of Ireland a hundred times more help than the fervid exaggerations of those who hate England rather more than they love Ireland. With a preface which makes historically clear the history of Ireland till recent times, Mr. Wells proceeds to etch in the picture of Irish affairs up till the death of Mr. Redmond—which marked the close of an epoch. The book is a history, but it is also that story of a great human soul, portrayed faithfully with its limitations as well as with its nobility.

How John Redmond, a young Irish gentleman, entered politics, how he forsook the chances of money-making and personal comfort, how he went to prison for his principles, how in later years by shrewd and courageous statesmanship he piloted the Home Rule Bill to passage through the British Houses of Parliament—all these things are set out with moderation and lucidity. The changing tides in Ireland during the past half-dozen years are described with a carefulness and lack of heat particularly valuable at the present time. There is something almost pathetic, from the Irishman's point of view, in the way that John Redmond had to fight not only Liberal leaders and Conservative leaders in England but also leading Irishmen, Irish Unionists, Irish Extremists, and Irishmen who seceded from his own party and established factions of their own.

There are in the book reasoned criticisms of Mr. Redmond, but there is no impugning of his sincerity, his courage, his absolute devotion to what he regarded as the best interests of Ireland. As a character sketch of a great man, it is worthy of comparison in human interest with Macaulay's study of William III, or Emerson's description of Napoleon Bonaparte. All through, Mr. Wells plays on the temperament and personality of John

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Redmond. He could have chosen no more effective way of telling the recent story of Ireland. Those who without full knowledge decry the Irish leader may read this book with much profit. Here is a passage which speaks for itself:

> The period of his leadership of the Parliamentary party was a period of emancipation for Ireland. It was the period of the conclusion of the land war, and the final recovery of the land by the people in the successive Land Purchase Acts; of the measures for the betterment of social conditions such as the Laborers Act, and the establishment of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and the Congested Districts Board; of the grant of autonomy in local affairs by the passing of the Irish Local Government Act; of the improvement of educational facilities, and the removal of long-standing and serious Roman Catholic educational difficulties in the establishment of the National University of Ireland.

Mr. Wells deals sympathetically with the rise of the Sinn Fein movement and explains it in illuminating fashion. There is one point in connection with this in which I do not think he would be adequate if he were presenting the whole case with regard to England and Ireland: because he makes only incidental references to the rebellion of 1916, slides over the hundreds of deaths caused by it, and emphasizes only the mistake made by the British in the military execution of a handful of the ringleaders. He entirely ignores the effect produced on British democracy by this attempt of Irish Extremists to stab England in the back while she was fighting for life or death in the greatest war of history. The historical student must know these things and get them in their proper proportion, in forming an opinion as to Ireland and England. This passage, however, is but incidental, and ought not to be the subject of serious criticism in connection with any book written by an Irishman about the Irish. The book remains a masterpiece of biography; it tells dramatically and faithfully the story of "the fine figure of a great Irish gentleman who played for a high stake gallantly and lost without dishonor".

The Life of John Redmond. By Warre B. Wells. George H. Doran Company.

UNDERSTANDING OUR NATIONAL PARKS

By Le Roy Jeffers

OF foremost importance in the life of the nation are our national parks and monuments. Every one has its distinctive and unrivaled features, some are becoming world-famous. Many people have visited one or two, but there are few who have acquaintance with all of them. Sooner or later we as a nation are destined to awaken to their value and we believe that this book will materially hasten that time.

This comprehensive account is of the greatest value to all who would visit our grandest scenery with an understanding appreciation. Mr. Yard is especially interested in educating the reader to a popular scientific knowledge and enjoyment of the geological aspects of scenery. He believes that anyone will find more lasting reward from our finest mountains and canyons if he knows something about the way in which they were formed and if, in a measure, he realizes the periods of time represented in their formation. He would add intellectual pleasure to the emotional enjoyment of scenery. We find his account especially interesting because it is thoroughly individual and not a repetition of other descriptions.

The author gathers the parks into general groups—the granite, the volcanic, the sedimentary, the Grand

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Canyon and our National Monuments. After outlining the general characteristics of a group he describes each of its members, giving its history, its distinctive features, and its most beautiful objects, together with much practical information for the visitor. Writing first of Yosemite, the incomparable, he accepts the conclusions of F. E. Matthes who has made the most recent geological studies of the valley. It is believed that the Merced River cut through the granite to nearly its present level, and that at a later date glacial erosion completed the work by widening and deepening the valley. In the proposed Roosevelt National Park in California is included much of our finest and grandest scenery. Enlarging the boundaries of the Sequoia National Park, where are found the world's largest and oldest trees, it will include the famous Kings and Kern River regions with their unequaled canyons, and the rugged mountains along the crest of the Sierra Nevada which culminate in Mount Whitney 14,502 feet. The new Lafayette National Park, the first of several which should ultimately be created east of the Mississippi, calls attention to the fact that Congress has as yet set aside only public lands, for Lafayette was purchased from private owners by public-spirited citizens and presented to the nation. In whatever part of the country they may be located, our most perfect examples of beautiful scenery should be publicly protected from commercial ruination.

One of the important services that national parks are rendering to man is the preservation of animal life. Practically all our wild animals have been misjudged because we have hunted them with a gun. When they are afforded protection by law, as in the Yellowstone, they appear very differently to man and are found to be peaceable and sometimes almost inclined to be social. None of them attack human beings unless they believe they are in danger. Removal of the fear of death by man causes as great a change in the animal, as does true respect for the value of life and its right to manifestation in the man.

Of world-wide importance was the long-continued effort resulting in the recent creation of our newest park, the Grand Canyon. Unique among the world's geological wonders, and scenically immeasurably beyond all other canyons, it would seem that there should have been no question about its proper preservation and development by the government. It has, however, taken thirty-three years of work to overcome private interests, politics, and government inertia. Instead of an area befitting the importance of the canyon, its friends have had to accept boundaries which follow far too closely the rim of the canyon. Probably the greatest undeveloped scenic region of our country is located along the northern rim, which is as yet practically inaccessible to people in general.

Among the National Monuments Zion Canyon in southwestern Utah is easily the most wonderful. When the scenic importance of the region is realized it should become a national park, for it combines splendid canyon and mountain scenery with marvelous coloring and sculpture. In the development of this region all support should be given the movement to construct a road from Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado to the Natural Bridges, Monument Valley, the Rainbow Natural Bridge, the north side of the Grand Canyon, and Zion Canyon.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sections are already in local use, but this southwestern wonderland is as yet generally inaccessible to the public. No one who intends to visit our scenic regions can afford to miss reading this book.

The Book of the National Parks. By R. S. Yard. Charles Scribner's Sons.

AN EXPLOSIVE BOOKSHOP

By Edmund Lester Pearson

OWEN WISTER, in the best of all college stories—short stories, that is—told about a wonderful inn, hidden somewhere in the villages of eastern Massachusetts, not too many parasangs from Cambridge to make it unattainable by a wandering undergraduate on a holiday. A place of divine cookery it was, and one of rare vintages, and precious old rums and brandies. (Woe and alas! I write on July 1.) Yet it was elusive; nobody could declare exactly where it lay, and many a student saw the years pass, and himself become a B. A. and go out into the world, without ever having found "The Bird in Hand",—for that is what this inn was called.

In some such tantalizing fashion Christopher Morley has conceived a mystically fascinating bookshop and placed it in Brooklyn! Living on Manhattan Island, naturally I know nothing about Brooklyn, except by humor, but this book of Morley's has made it a place of fearful charm. It should not have been hard, in writing "Kim", to have found romance at the headquarters of all romance,—but to find it in Brooklyn! No more will the name of that city suggest to me overmuch domesticity, croquet tournaments, and the kind of middle-aged respectability which in men leads to the cultivation of sidewhiskers. Instead, it will recall streets fancifully named for poets and novelists, book dealers who invite the casual customer to help eat a delicious luncheon, assistant book dealers with beautiful blue eyes and gleaming silk-stockinged ankles,—all these, and German spies and plotters thrown in. Can it be that the mere East River separates us from so much? Or is Morley's a Brooklyn that never was on sea or land?

In this one book the author has made what first appeals to the average reader: a novel. There is a good story in it, an amusing, even exciting, plot of the moving-picture variety. (I expect to see "The Haunted Bookshop" in the movies.) It is plain and obvious melodrama for a few pages, written with whimsical chuckles by the author, who is quite aware of the incongruity of hold-ups, daring rescues, and thunderous climaxes in a quiet bookshop.

Next, the book is full of alluring comments upon books,—the author, even more than his book dealer, Roger Mifflin, has the art of making you think, "There is a book I must read". And you jot down the title. There were five such titles on a slip of paper near me, before I was three-quarters of the way into "The Haunted Bookshop".

Finally, the book abounds with odd and unrelated comments upon all manner of things, and is delightful for that reason, just as "The Anatomy of Melancholy" (which Roger Mifflin loved) and "The History of European Morals" (which he undoubtedly loved) are delightful. It deserves an index. I can fancy some of the entries: "Boarding-house bathtubs, best time to use", "Cook, Lafcadio Hearn's, anecdote about".

Three or four of the fifteen chap-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ters are familiar to readers of THE BOOKMAN, through having appeared in its pages. Roger Mifflin, the owner of the traveling book-van of Morley's "Parnassus on Wheels", and his wife Helen, reappear in this story. New characters are the perilously beautiful amateur clerk, Titania, and Aubrey Gilbert, the advertising man, whose lyric tribute to Chapman's prunes (page 27) is so much sheer joy. Roger Mifflin talking pure literature, rifling the ice-box at midnight, or fighting the young hero is a brick. Roger talking politics is badly askew —like most of the apologists for the pacifists. He laments that during the war "brave and simple men walked in the horrors of hell", but he is tenderly sympathetic toward Henry Ford and Bertrand Russell whose counsels would have left brave and simple men defenseless amid horrors.

Two good touches are the saving of Roger, in the explosion, by the bulwark of "a set of Trollope", and the description of the impatience of the two travelers returning from Philadelphia when their families were in danger. They "felt a personal hatred of the brakeman who permitted passengers . . . to straggle leisurely aboard instead of flogging them in with knotted whips".

The book has almost made me decide to venture through the tube to Brooklyn, and hunt for the original haunted bookshop.

The Haunted Bookshop. By Christopher Morley. Doubleday, Page and Co.

THE MAGICAL ART OF THE MOVIE

By Benjamin De Casseres

NOTHING can be conceived as more diabolical than to show us the mechanism of the greatest and most idolized illusion of all history—the "movie". What shall be done with the man who has done it, and done it in such a way that he makes the disillusion as fascinating as the illusion? He is a double-distilled Prospero, we think, or a fantastic Mephisto raised to the nth dimension. Well, we have just got to forgive him, that's all.

The great scamp who has done this is Austin G. Lescarboura—in a book that ought to be read by every movie fan in the world. It is called "Behind the Motion-Picture Screen". This is a large book of four hundred and twenty-five pages, handsomely printed, typographically attractive, and illustrated on nearly every other page. It is the completest exposition yet printed of the moving-picture, and probably will remain for some time the standard book on the great phantom art. If I called Mr. Lescarboura the Homer of the Film or the Darwin of the Phantom, I would only register the enthusiasm which roared and raced through my nerves, brain, and blood in the delightful hours I used in going through his book. It was like being taken to the other side of the moon, or standing in the middle of the sun with old Promo-Demi-Panjan-Apollo, and watching him cook up the forms of life on the planets.

In twenty-two chapters every phase of making the "movie" is covered. We see the crowned heads of Shadowland at work; we learn how the burglar walks the tight-rope from the Woolworth tower to the Singer Building without leaving the studio; how the Lusitania sinks in the studio pool; how an automobile climbs steeples and runs around the moon; and a thousand other things to make the eye stick out and the hair stand up—that is, if you are a child like me; and I hope you are.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The camera man and the camera reporter here come in for their "just rewards", as the old melodrama used to say. These men are in the thick of it, everywhere, and like soldiers, firemen, policemen, and reporters, must never know what it is "to lay down".

The "movie" has become a world within a world. If man is the microcosm to the macrocosm, the world beyond the screen is the sub-microcosm. It is another species of life. Mr. Lescarboura tells us that the screen world is only in its infancy—that the screenless "movie" is coming, then the screenless talking, singing "movie"—then the screenless "movie" that will combine all the arts in one. We await the Wagner of phantom-land. It is a vision that puts the aeroplane and the other inventions of man into the toy class.

The book should be read by everyone who enjoys the Art Mysterious.

Behind the Motion-Picture Screen. By Austin G. Lescarboura. Scientific American Publishing Company.

DOGS OF PEACE AND WAR

By Walter A. Dyer

So long as human nature remains what it is, there will be people who like dogs and people who do not. By the same token there will be people who like dog stories and people who are bored by them, but the dog-loving class will always be numerous enough to make such books worth while. The others can and should ignore them.

This peculiar sentiment of man for dog has produced some rather remarkable literature, chiefly in French and English. I do not recall a noteworthy expression of this relationship in any of the Russian, German, or Scandinavian literature that I have read—certainly not in the oriental. Although Russia produced the Borzoi and Germany the Pomeranian, the Dachshund, and the Great Dane, it takes a Frenchman, an Englishman, a Scotchman, an Irishman, or an American really to understand the dog and to write of him with sympathy and imagination. Maeterlinck, to be sure, who wrote so charmingly and convincingly of dog nature, was a Belgian.

Dogs have appeared more or less prominently in literature since the Odyssey, but usually as minor characters, sometimes as mere stage properties. Dog literature, in the true sense, is less than a century old.

The poets started it—Byron and Burns. Victorian novelists like George Eliot brought dogs into their stories more boldly than their predecessors. Dogs hunt and play through the pages of Sir Walter Scott, and the pepper and mustard terriers of Dandie Dinmont are real characters in "Guy Mannering". Then came two dog classics of the first water—Ouida's "The Dog of Flanders" and Captain Marryat's "Snarleyow". One questions, indeed, whether Ouida has ever been surpassed in this field.

I propose sometime to prepare a classified and descriptive bibliography of canine literature, and I believe that dog lovers will be surprised to discover how much worthy writing and characterization there is in it. It will include, of course, "Bob, Son of Battle", "Rab and His Friends", and "Beautiful Joe". Of the books of the twentieth century there is John Muir's peerless "Stickeen" (I can hardly speak of that thrilling little classic without using superlatives), John Galsworthy's "Memories", Ian Hay's "Scally: the Story of a Perfect Gentleman", "The Bar Sinister", by Rich-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ard Harding Davis, "The Story of Scotch", by Enos A. Mills, and John Taintor Foote's "Dumb-Bell of Brookfield" (of uneven merit, but striking a true emotional note in "The Runt"). Jack London's "The Call of the Wild", "White Fang", and "Michael" are in a class by themselves, like most of his other work. And finally the jewel of them all, Eleanor Atkinson's wonderful story of quaint, devoted little "Greyfriars Bobby".

Whether or not the Great War has produced anything of permanent value as literature is a question outside the scope of this brief review. Certainly it has produced an unprecedented flood of books, and the dog has occasionally wriggled his way into them. That dogs have played a heroic and important rôle in the fighting is well known, but thus far we have been given only fragmentary accounts of their exploits. I hope that someone who has fought with them and understands them, and who can really write, will be moved to record their part in the war in a deathless volume. They patiently await their historian.

Meanwhile the war has given us a few dog stories. "Pierrot, Dog of Belgium" was written during the first year. Later came "Only a Dog: a Story of the Great War", by Bertha Whitridge Smith. The latest is " 'Poilu', a Dog of Roubaix", by Eleanor Atkinson. It is the story of a French family who lived in the vicinity of Lille in territory early occupied by the invading Germans; a story of the manner in which the war brought death and misery to them, dragging the once happy household to the brink of destruction, scattering the family, and robbing it of its men. "Poilu" is a cart dog of the Roubaix market, trained to guard the home and bear its burdens—a typical *chien de trait.* He goes away with his master to draw a machine gun in the war and later a supply cart. In the end he finds his way back to his devastated home. (There is something reminiscent in this outline, but never mind that.)

It is a good story, but personally I was disappointed in it. Toward the end, when we come to patriotic old Grandpère's dramatic exploit and the sad death of "Poilu", it fulfils expectations; but in the earlier part one is uncomfortably conscious of an effort to fill in with details, the point of view and the interest shift rather too often, and there is less dog in the story than one is led to expect from the title and the author's name. The atmosphere is well sustained, however, and dog lovers will not willingly miss the tale. And perhaps one masterpiece like "Greyfriars Bobby" in a lifetime is all that any author should venture to ask of the gods.

The touching story of a real dog of war, who served with the Red Cross and risked his life for his master, has been told in graceful verse by Edward Peple. It is a slender volume which will not vainly seek a place on the dog lover's five-foot shelf.

The outstanding quality of all such books is a sentiment which, I fancy, must seem a bit unreal to that class of humankind in whose hearts the love of dogs lies unborn or undeveloped, but it never fails to find a quick and comprehending response among thousands who have reason to marvel at the intelligence and character of that one of all the beasts of earth who has won the title of the friend of man.

Poilu, a Dog of Roubaix. By Eleanor Atkinson. Harper and Bros.
The War Dog. By Edward Peple. E. P. Dutton and Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EXPANDED INTEREST IN POETRY

BY AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR

WHEN the war broke out, people were concerned as to the effect it would have on their own special preoccupations. Particularly did those who were interested in poetry worry over that art's reaction to the world upheaval. There were those who predicted its barrenness, if not its destruction; others affirmed that since poetry springs from strong emotion and thrives upon it, this time should be far more rich in song than less stirring and more prosperous days. We all know which prophecy proved the right one. It has been in poetry as in the fighting force—death has not spared the best, but as the leaders fell, the rank and file carried on. Nor did the supply outrun the demand; the readers of poetry multiplied with the writers. Now that peace of a sort has come, the question reopens with the changing conditions. How will the cessation of the war affect poetry, its writers and its readers?

In view of the reversion to old ways almost appalling to some who had thought them forever outgrown—which has come with the relaxed tension, it seems strange that war poetry should still be the best seller of its class. One gets the same verdict, however, from the scholarly aristocrat of bookshops; from the department store that sells at cut rates, frequented by the thrifty whom one used to call bourgeois before that term became opprobrious; and from the largest department of verse maintained by any bookseller in the country, a place where one meets conservative and radical, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free. There has been a slight falling off in the sale of war anthologies, but the poems of Service, Brooke, Sassoon, Nichols, Kipling, Seeger, and Kilmer are now ranked as staples. In connection with the last name, here is a quaint bit of popular psychology which one can fancy causing a ripple of amusement in the poets' corner of paradise. I asked the presiding genius of the department-store counter what books of poetry the public found most attractive nowadays.

"The war poetry", she replied without hesitation. "Why, we simply can't keep Kilmer's 'Trees' in stock at all."

"But none of those poems are about the war!" I exclaimed, remembering that smiling book. She considered, with the expression of indignant bewilderment which comes over us all when we realize that a condition we had taken comfortably for granted needs to be thought out.

"No—" she admitted. "No—that's true; but people think of them that way!"

Of course they do. *Finis coronat opus*—the glow of a red aureole reaches far. But when the war is history, people will still love "Trees", and "Dave Lilly", and "The Snowman in the Yard". The author lives by virtue of more than his heroic death; and because he knew how to sing to the hearts of the plain people, I shall not be surprised to hear him quoted some day by tram-conductors, as one

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hears the gondoliers singing Tasso to the rhythm of their oars.

I believe that as the world grows normal again, there will remain a deepened and expanded interest in poetry as an expression of the meaning and beauty of life. Among forthcoming volumes one finds not only the familiar outstanding figures—Masefield, Masters, Amy Lowell,—but minors more or less known and many names that are new, the more hopeful sign because the field they represent is so broad and diversified. There are many of the poets of revolt, but we must credit the camp of the conventional with the most picturesque of the new figures. By a pleasant paradox, some of the most virile of modern verse is the work of a young woman, a discovery on our side of the Atlantic though well known in England. Miss Fox-Smith can give us sailor songs with the tang of Masefield and Kipling at their best, and nobody who follows the sea in body or mind can afford to miss her two books, "Small Craft" and "Sailor Town". See how she brings to life in a few lines one of the deepest of passions, a sailor's love for his ship:

"At last we knew that she was gone, as best and worst may go,
The good ship and the bad likewise, the fast ship and the slow.
A fast ship was the Matterhorn, when all them kites was spread,
A fast ship and a fine she was——"
"Aye, she was fast," I said.
* * * * * * *
From course to skysail up she soared like a midsummer cloud;
In all this earth I have not seen a thing more brave and proud;
And she is gone, as dreams do, or a song sung long before,
Or the golden years of a man's youth when they are his no more.

By Casey's Occidental Rooms a bitter thing I heard,
With a heavy heart I turned away, and long I spoke no word;
I bared my head there where I stood, "God rest her soul," I said,
As if some woman I had loved in a far land was dead.

Some may feel that her style echoes the poets with whom I have named her. I grant the echo, but maintain that when ideas stand as squarely on their own feet as hers do, they have a life of their own and the right to live it. I agree that Kipling might have written "The Gypsy Soldier"—but as it happens, he did not write it and Miss Fox-Smith did. Again, read,—

SHIPMATE SORROW

I was shipmate with Sorrow in a time gone by.
We shared wheel and look-out, old Sorrow and I.
Good times and bad times, foul weather and fair,
The old grey face of him was always there.

There was never chanty raised, there was never song I heard,
But his voice would be in it like a crying bird;
I was dull in the dog watches when the laugh went free
Because of old Sorrow sitting down by me.

I thought I could lose him in the stir and change
Of bright wicked cities all sunlit and strange.
Came a hand at my elbow and a voice at my ear—
It was old patient Sorrow saying, "Lad, I'm here!"

And by the bustling harbour, up the busy street,
Many a time I see him, many a time I meet
The old grey face there of one I used to know—
And it's old Shipmate Sorrow out of long ago.

And the watch at the halliards, they may sing with a will,
But the voice I used to hear—oh, sometimes I hear it still,
Like a wind in a shroud piping or a seabird's cry—
And it's old Sorrow singing out of times gone by.

Masefield might have written that? True—but since he did not. . . .

What is original verse anyway? (This topic, inevitable in a time like the present, when poetry is largely

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

produced and people are sufficiently interested in it to discuss it, can fill a daylight-saving evening and spill over into the real dark.) If form is the point, what is an original verse form? For most of us, there has been a bright day when we thought we had the answer to that question. We invented or were inspired, according to our temperament, and enjoyed the sweet delusion of our own originality till some t o well-educated kill-joy identified our treasure as a Gælic dirge or an Esquimaux epithalamium or a drinking song of the Jebusites. As for ideas, originality in that field is a hopeless mirage—we have Solomon's word for it after a long and intensive experience. There is nothing new under the sun, not even revolt—the most insurgent verse is as derivative as the offspring of Gray's "Elegy" and the "Ode to a Skylark".

Travail and bondage, battle-flags unfurled,
Earth at the prime and God earth's wrongs above,
Honour and hope, youth and the beckoning world,
Peril and war and love.

Well-worn themes these, and yet I doubt if this generation sees them exhausted. Human nature will interest the world as long as nature continues to produce humans. The unusual attracts and the familiar retains—Amy Lowell and Sara Teasdale are equally popular in the reading world.

Of course, it is always a temptation to try for new ideas, or at least for a startling rearrangement of the old ones. We may be glad of that—what would life be without its explorers? Of course there are varying degrees of achievement. Some of these efforts remind me of an image so cherished that comparison with it implies no disparagement. One of the clearest memories of my childhood is an attempt at an unusual form of beauty. It was nameless in our home except when referred to with shudders as "the thing Aunt Prissy made", but I have since heard it appropriately called an Everything. Upon a basis of simple crockery—ours had, I believe, been a bean-pot in private life—was a layer of putty that held imbedded every form of domestic jetsam, hairpins, buttons and buckles from the intimate to the formal, corkscrews, wishbones, ex-jewelry—memory fails—the whole richly gilded. I linger before some of today's verse as I did before our Everything, fascinated by the profusion of detail, trying in vain to trace the outline of the common clay upon which all this gorgeous irrelevance is plastered.

The Everything in verse as in domestic decoration is of course not the work of the artist, though the craving for expression which it represents is entitled to respect. It has a curious kinship, though, with the work of the real artist in some manners of poetry—the artist who seems so intoxicated with his own skill that while he revels in theoretical nakedness, he swathes nature in a robe so stiff with embroidery that the great heart beneath can scarcely move the rich stuff with its beating. The lovers of simplicity may not care for this style, but it has its admirers; and, thank Heaven, one of the growths of our time is a recognition of the truth that there are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays and every single one of them is right. It would be impossible today, I hope, for intolerant criticism to compel one of the best known of our women writers to justify her existence as a poet by the thousands of letters from those who had found comfort and delight in her verse. We have learned that there

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is room on the world's book-shelf for Wordsworth and Lorenzo and Shakespeare and Heine and Beranger and Euripides and Isaiah and Poe. Blessed be the broad and catholic mind which ungrudgingly recognizes as poetry the expression that narrower and more academic days would have scorned, whether its reason for being be helpfulness to the world, an attempt to throw new light on beauty, or only the delight it gives its creator. When mankind realizes poetry and religion as spirit transcending substance, encompassing and penetrating as the air we breathe and as essential to everyday life, will not the kingdom of heaven be at hand?

NOVELS OF CHANGE

BY H. W. BOYNTON

AFTER all, there are only two or three, or four or five novels in each "season's output" that reward the professional taster with a really fresh savor. Most of the time his palate is engaged in considering whether So-and-So's latest is up to his well-known mark, whether it tastes right for that kind of brew; or in trying not to dull itself altogether in a necessary (if momentary) contact with various imitative compounds alleged to be original and new. How far the matter has to do with the famous distinction between highbrow and lowbrow methods and constituencies cannot be laid down with certainty. But it is tolerably clear that the lowbrow demand is almost invariably for more of the same, and that what it reacts to with enthusiasm is a slightly new flavoring of the old stuff, rather than a fresh basic savor. How much of the popularity of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" is the result, I wonder, of our pleasure in recognizing our own human nature and our own attitude toward the war-time world, beneath the exotic surface of the story? How much of the charm of "The Gay-Dombeys" (for which I predict a large hearing) lies in its linking of a beloved if officially sniffed-at past, the Victorian and post-Victorian past, with our own uneasy present?

Yet I for one do feel a fresh savor, the real thing, in this book. No doubt this is largely a distillation of a singularly full and varied experience. But Mr. Wells (who supplies as enthusiastic a preface as if the book were his own) goes, as usual, too far in the generalization it inspires. Here is his concluding summary:

> This book is one of the best first novels I have ever read. Would that more men who have handled realities would write in the same fashion. I have long had a lurking persuasion that nearly any man of experience who cared to be frank about his business could produce at least one better novel than the sworn and addicted novelist. We have too many mere novelist's novels. Sir Harry does much in this book to rescue the novel from its present unhappy entanglement, the posings and pretensions of "art", and restore it to literature.

I believe Mr. Wells shares the general contempt (general in all ages) for professional critics, and offers this, presumably, as the kind of thing they should write. Would that more men who have handled realities *could* write

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

like Sir Harry Johnston! They are always trying to. As for "rescuing the novel" from anything whatever, that is of course nonsense. Sir Harry's book, first novel or not, is admirable and charming because, with all its surface informality, it is uncommonly "well-written"; an original work and also a work of art, or, if Mr. Wells sees a difference, of literature. Being merely a critic, I am unable to see that the novel is in any "unhappy entanglement" or that it needs "rescuing" of any kind. It is the novel reader rather who might stand a bit of rescuing from the entanglement in which the current use of critical terms, at once casual and arbitrary, by novelists and novel-boosters, has involved him.

However, it may be gratefully admitted that a certain amateurish flavor (which, like that of "Joseph Vance", is rather archly conscious of itself) gives the book much of its freshness. Here, praises be, is a story-teller who does not belong to any familiar school, who does not despise the life or the art of the nineteenth century as a preliminary to renouncing the twentieth, who is at home among all kinds of people and opinions, movements and moralities, within the range of the British Empire during the half-century which has seen to its building and consolidation. In which process no small part was played by the author himself, in perhaps its most difficult field, central Africa. Sir Harry Hamilton Johnston has an imposing record in Who's Who as zoologist, economist, explorer, and British administrator. But he is anything but a novice in authorship, with a score of books to his credit on themes as far apart as "British Mammals", "A History of the British Empire in Africa", "Phonetic Spelling", and "A Gallery of Heroes and Heroines". Among other medals in his possession is an early one from the Kensington School of Art, where he studied in the 'seventies. Painting, biological studies, and music are the "recreations" confessed to by him.

But he might have been and done all this and more without possessing or developing the least ability to tell a story, to embody in a creative narrative the impressions, experiences and "philosophy" of his rich and active days. As I have said, plenty of men of distinction and accomplishment have tried to do this and failed. This writer does not fail; he tells, with great skill despite all its surface irregularities and whims, a most interesting story of his own world and his own time. And this is exactly because it contains little or no "autobiography" in the sense of actual transcript from experience and observation. He has created this story and these people out of the *stuff* of experience and observation. By his use of the Dombeys and other Dickensish names, he sends us frankly back to the Victorians for our starting-place. But "The Gay-Dombeys" is as unlike "Dombey and Son" as "Joseph Vance" was unlike "David Copperfield". It shows today in the act of emerging from yesterday. Its people, especially its inimitable Suzanne, give reality to that most shadowy of generations to the ordinary imagination—that of our immediate forebears and predecessors.

In "The Gay-Dombeys", although (since it *is* a good story) its main virtue lies in its human action, all sorts of social and political problems of the time are touched upon. The author himself, like his present hero, has given most of his life to the extension of British influence, especially

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in Africa. To him the doctrines of the responsibilities of the higher class and the higher race, of *noblesse oblige* and of the White Man's Burden, have been matters of simple faith and whole-souled practice. However, he has not been willing to accept the abuses of imperialism with its uses. His Eustace Morven is gently transferred from the field of his best labors when his idealism becomes inconvenient. In his days of retirement he enters Home politics to become, for similar cause, a thorn in his party's side. The social and political and industrial reforms which are already in the air enlist his honest sympathy: and though time disillusions it does not break him.

"The Shadow of the Past" has much to do with the pros and cons of British empire-building in South Africa. Its "past" is the period of the Boer War, which has left across the land shadows of discontent and racial prejudice. The majority of the Boers, especially those of most intelligence, have accepted the situation, forgiven the initial wrongs they have suffered at England's hands, and abandoned their special jealousy of race in the interests of an united South Africa. They love the land, but recognize that the settlers of English stock love it also; and that the dominance of British methods and influences is, on the whole, good for the future of the country. But there is a rebellious and determined minority which has never forgotten or forgiven; and among this minority, in the years before the world war, the sinister hand of Germany is sowing trouble for England when the hour shall strike.

Our action puts this whole situation in concrete form. The central figure is a young and healthy Briton, an engineer by training, who has hitherto drifted casually through life without really growing up. While at a loose end in Cape Town he makes a reckless wager, and finds himself committed to a mysterious mission inland; at the same moment he meets a nice English girl, who gives him his first impulse to be of use in the world. But he must get his ungrateful errand out of the way; it is to take a letter to a Boer farm far back in the Veld. Of this letter it is enough to say that it concerns the machinations of its sender, a German agitator, and certain honest Boers who plot rebellion in the name of patriotism against British domination. There is a beautiful Boer girl at "Benfontein" whose function in the story is obvious. In the end our young Briton finds his straight road of duty, and, with the coming of the great war, South Africa as a whole proves her loyalty to the future as opposed to the past. It is a romance of unusual atmosphere and of no mean characterization: the women in particular, the Kriges mother and daughter and the faithful Brenda, are people worth knowing.

A well-told and very British story is "While There's Life". It deals with no particular problem unless that of the natural warfare between convention and the individual. Convention here means English convention in its rawest state, that state of mind which makes twin gods of property and the proper thing. Now a large part of our post-Victorian fiction has been vigorously engaged in strafing this very state of mind. But the ordinary method has been to set one generation against another, making the accidents of the calendar responsible for the whole fracas. Down with paterfamilias, his dulness and his petty tyranny! Up with the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

young fry, not more than just out of their teens, and therefore full of originality, courage, and general hopefulness for the world. In "While There's Life" and, as we shall see, rather more violently in "The Moon and Sixpence", this partition of the generations, in itself a rather dull convention, has been broken away from. It has been done before, of course, in "Mr. Polly" and elsewhere. But as a rule the hero who passes for eccentric by virtue of his ingenuous normality, his heart of a child, has been relatively young and more or less strongly opposed to his elders. Hugh D'Eath is an English country gentleman of means, with a grown family of presentable and coarse-fibred offspring, lovers of possessions and positions. He himself has retained his child-heart in secret, and his years of respectable conformity and usefulness have burdened him sorely. Now he learns that he has only a year or so to live, finds it not worth while to keep up his front, and decides to have his little fling. He divides his property among his children, who, with one exception, have already cheerfully buried him in fancy, and even permits himself to be condemned to a German "cure". But finding himself alone and for once unwatched in London, he is tempted to use his allotted year of life instead of lending it to family opinion. So he cheats his people into thinking that he has gone to Germany, and takes up his quarters in a sort of settlement house in a London slum, in which an unworldly physician, an old acquaintance, holds forth. In this life the aging and condemned gentleman finds unexpected interests and rewards, including work, health, and love. Meanwhile his family have found him not so easy to dispense with; and he comes to life, as it were, to find honor among them such as he has never had in his meek and conforming days. An excellent romantic comedy.

The "Democracy" of Shaw Desmond is a story of failure. Here the generous forces which would procure an Utopia for the multitude are dissolved and overthrown, as usual—partly by their own vague centrifugal tendency and partly by the superior organization of an enemy who knows what he wants and how to get it. Our radical novelists do not make a happy picture of the universal brotherhood business as a going concern. More commonly, however, as in Mr. Sinclair's "Jimmie Higgins", the onus of failure is thrown upon the reactionary forces which oppose anything resembling true equality among men. "Democracy", employing the greatest of analogies, shows anew how Demos is wont to visit upon the heads of its own would-be saviors the wrath of predestined failure. That is a tremendous if demonstrably melodramatic scene of climax to which the present narrator leads us—Creegan the strong leader who, led astray by his visionary enthusiasm, has invoked force and led his unorganized hundreds to predestined slaughter at the hands of the well-prepared servants of authority: and is crucified by his people beside the bloody barricades for which they hold him responsible.

This picture of modern democracy, with all its frankness, and its deep sympathy with the aspirations of the proletariat is not, as is usual with such pictures, tagged with any label. No panacea or formula is given away with it. It expresses warmly and strikingly something that this young and brilliant Irishman has seen and felt at first hand, about the forces at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work in English society and politics, in very recent years. He paints a picture, full of Celtic ardor and of Celtic melancholy, of tomorrow as, for England, it may spring from the troubled forehead of today.

Tomorrow, rather than today or yesterday, is always the natural stamping-ground of the radical dreamer. The race of prophets has by no means come to an end with Bellamy, Jack London, and Wells. Besides "Democracy" three other novels of the moment try to show what the world may be in the nearer or farther future, if the forces of extreme radicalism, now so audible, really have their way with it. The author of "A Romance of Two Centuries" thinks it is all going to be mighty satisfactory and interesting. The hero has a new and up-to-date way of taking off from the present into the unknown. He is infected by the malicious Hun with the germs of the African sleeping sickness which put him out of actual business with the world for some time. A rich and benevolent lady devotes herself to his somnolent entity, keeps him alive by infusions of blood from her own veins, and on her eventual demise leaves him in the care of a museum, properly endowed, and well-protected from curio-hunters by a glass case. In the year 2023 he is brought to, and his fun begins. He finds himself in a world thoroughly equalized, municipalized, standardized, and even "geographized".

The book-cover of "A Romance of Two Centuries" is adorned with two pictures, one showing the grossly unstandardized sky-line of New York today, the other a symmetrical (and hideous) metropolis of the future which might be modeled by a child of mathematical bent out of a fair assortment of blocks and spools. Citizens in that far glad day are to be awarded felicitous names such as Lilac Propheticen Namefranciscur and Oleander Parentive Neurodundeeian which, lest they forget, they carry about them on their "permanent life cards". People live alike, dress alike, think alike; reactionary motives like patriotism and individualism have ceased to operate. And so on, to an elaborate and not very enlivening development, by the author's mechanical fancy, unhampered by common sense or humor, of this new world of equality and brotherhood. Sovietically speaking, it is a masterpiece.

The author of "She", as we know, would be content with nothing short of establishing a record, when it comes to putting people to sleep and waking them in a subsequent age. His latest yarn, "When the World Shook", happens to be based on this very situation. But he has his sleeper, or rather sleepers, snooze in their crystal cases in a tropical cavern for a neat two hundred and fifty thousand years before (at the predestined hour) a wandering Briton assists at their awakening. Oro and Yva are father and daughter, super-people of a far time whose wisdom, arts, and very existence man has for ages forgotten. Their civilization has risen greatly beyond our own, their control of natural forces enables them to journey to the stars, or to control storm and earthquake. Our Wanderer Arbuthnot and his two companions, cast away on the tropical isle which holds the sleepers, have a delightful time learning the new tricks of that ancient world. Between him and Yva there are several bonds. In a previous incarnation he has loved her, a quarter-millennium back; and also while

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she has slept her spirit has dwelt in the body of his now dead wife in England. But they have no steady luck. The present episode is closed by Yva's sacrificing herself to save the western civilization which her father has judged worthy of destruction. The superman is considerably "peeved" by what the world has come to:

> I would have saved the East, because in it alone there is increase, and thence alone can rise the last great race of man which I would have given to your children for an heritage. Moreover, think not that you Westerners have done with wars. I tell you that they are but begun and that the sword shall eat you up, and what the sword spares class shall snatch from class in the struggle for supremacy and ease.

"Red Friday" forecasts, in retrospective form, what might happen if Bolshevism were to gain foothold in America. Four persons embody the forces which would be at work: Plangonev, sinister head, at the end of 1919, of the now triumphant Russian Soviets; Stephen Black, a great American financier whose selfish individualism lays him open to any radical movement by which he personally may profit; the Reverend J. Appleton Todd, a Christian Socialist susceptible to any promise of social and industrial reform; and Black's daughter, a simple patriot whose insight and courage save the country at last from the ruin into which Plangonev's conspiracy threatens to plunge it. His plot is, briefly, to destroy American capital by taxing it out of existence. Mr. Turner shows ingeniously and vividly how, with the aid of a single great power on Wall Street, such a plot might work out. The process, Plangonev argues, is already going on. It may be hastened, and at the same time Black may reap enormous wealth from it instead of being gradually submerged by it. It is to be done by double pressure from the master of capital and the master of labor. Wages are to be kept at a high level, taxes and supertaxes are to annihilate capital, and so a bloodless revolution quietly and certainly be brought about. At the eleventh hour the death of Black and Plangonev prevents the consummation of the plot. Religious and patriotic feeling have triumphed in Charlotte Black, and as for our Christian Socialist, he discovers that at bottom he is an individualist: "I am an American,—the most extreme individualist of all. For the individualists came West, conquering the world. And here we are! The communists remained always in the rear—in the East. If you like them, why not go back there—to Russia?"

"Anymoon" is an equally reactionary study of England trying the experiment of an extreme democratic régime. Anymoon is a cheerful demagogue who takes the leading part in the "Great Upheaval" in England which is supposed to follow the world war. Parliament is abolished. Great Britain and Ireland are "divided into twenty-two equal electoral districts, each governed by a Local Commune, elected by universal suffrage, which, subject to the control of a National Council, had supreme legislative council in its own state". Anymoon has himself made President of the Council. The complications en-

---

The Gay-Dombeys. By Sir Harry Johnston. The Macmillan Co.

The Shadow of the Past. By F. E. Mills Young. George H. Doran Company.

While There's Life. By Elinor Mordaunt. Henry Holt and Co.

Democracy. By Shaw Desmond. Charles Scribner's Sons.

A Romance of Two Centuries. By Kenneth Guthrie. The Platonist Press.

When the World Shook. By H. Rider Haggard. Longmans, Green and Co.

Red Friday. By George Kibbe Turner. Little, Brown and Co.

Anymoon. By Horace Bleackley. John Lane Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suing from this attempt to build up a totally new system out of whole cloth are elaborately and often amusingly described. The upshot is that the nation grows weary of experiments, restores Parliament, including the Upper House, and finally "invites His Majesty to come back to his own again". Anymoon we leave complacently viewing a new and more secure future:

> Although he had resolved upon a complete renunciation of principles no sense of failure bedimmed his persistent optimism. On the contrary he was feeling sanguine and exalted. . . . "The whirligig of time brings in his revenges," he muttered to himself; "they hissed me off the stage as Cromwell, but, by Jove, I'll show them that I can play the part of General Monk."

ON THE MANTELPIECE

Audi Alteram Partem

BY JAMES LANE ALLEN

THE roses and vines and the tall, straight, delicate poplars,
Growing about a beautiful old sixteenth-century French château,
One clear morning of autumn were strung with silver ropes of spider-web,
And the cold, green grass with its butterfly leaves
Was rimmed with white dew.
From the tops of the poplars could have been seen the fields,
Far away in the sunlight, sere and brown like a flooring—
Out there sere and brown with the last of their summer music.

A valet with a duster in his hand and on his forearm a dust cloth—
He may have been Swiss, for he wore a loin-cloth of forest green—
Entered a front room of the château and suddenly stood perfectly still there,
Listening amid the decorous morning silence of the château
To a loud, nasty, little foreign noise coming from somewhere.
He uttered a few words, straight as the poplars but far from being so delicate.
Uttered them in a language of the Academy and of Fabre,
Finding the language of Fabre adequate for what he had to say regarding a bug,
Adding in the same language, "What are you doing there under that rug?"
And forward he strode and gave a quick
Academic or dithyrambic or choric kick
At the loose beautiful old marble (perhaps) brick.

And the Cricket on the Hearth,
For all its matutinal spontaneous mirth,
And without time for a sigh
That no poet was nigh
To see him die,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Was mashed—song and senses, back and belly—
Into unpotted cricket jelly.
And all the literary offspring of Boz,
Boz who despised your sentimentality
But doted on his own sentimentality
(As the rest of us)—
All the literary offspring of Boz
Who despise sentimentality about a Dresden shepherdess
But dote on sentimentality about the toes of a cricket—
The twentieth-century Bozzers,
Successors to those nineteenth-century ones
Who loved the domestic canary, and the owl if perched on a bookcase,
And the pheasant with its young and its nest if well arranged on a table—
Served *sous cloche* like mushrooms,
The twentieth-century Bozzers, green and leafy with genius
And ready to exude poetic gum at the bare mention of the natural,
Laboring at the cult of the natural
And therefore never natural themselves
Because no cult is natural
But is a saturated solution of self-consciousness,
All the Neo-Bozzers must have wailed aloud
At the sudden violent death
Of the Cricket on the Hearth—
A natural thing making natural music,
Having been caught in an altogether unnatural place.

But the valet lifted the little Dresden shepherdess from the mantelpiece
And dusted her tenderly and put her back in her place,
As the valet before him had done,
As the valet after him would do,
And as the valet after *him* would dust her tenderly and put her back in her place.
But he held her awhile and at arm's length looked at her,
Smiled at her slippers and at the rose in her hand,
Smiled at her hat tilted the way he had seen one,
Thought of someone he loved and slipped his arm about her
In advance of the coming dusk and counted the days to follow
Before *she* should have fine things on her feet and her hair and her bosom.
Then the more briskly he went on with his dusting,
The happier for the shepherdess as workman, lover, and man,
And none the worse for the happiness.

One day the Marquis, lord of the château and gardens,
White and slight and slim like the poplars about his birthplace,
Paused before the shepherdess, thinking of the Marquise,
Seeing her as she was in the days of their youth together—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Days now vanished forever beyond the brown fields of autumn.
And all that day with a tenderer grace and an eye on the lost
He watched her.
One day the Marquise, catching sight of the shepherdess,
Suddenly thought of something laid away in its freshness,
Folded still sweet and fresh in its antique woodwork.
It she would send as a gift to the daughter of the curé,
About to be married, a godchild.

One day the abbé, the scholar, brother of the Marquis,
Walking gravely in the room with thoughts of his history,
Wheeled angrily before the little Dresden shepherdess on the mantelpiece,
Remembering Marie Antoinette and her acres of pastoral playground
In the forest of Versailles near the Petit Trianon.
Saw once more and more near him French follies and revolution,
Went straight from the room and wrote more fiercely on avenging Time,
Wrote on the work of France in the coming glory of the world.

But all the valets mashed all the crickets
Singing in the morning stillness of the beautiful sixteenth-century French château.
And none of them as he dusted the shepherdess laid her in the nook of his arm
And carried her out to the fields and set her up there with the crickets,
Thinking the fields the place for the Dresden shepherdess.
And none of them caught a cricket and brought it back to the château
And dusted it and put it on the mantelpiece
Or under the mantelpiece as the natural place for a cricket;
And none of the valets, if he could help it, killed a cricket in the fields,
But stepped over it carefully if tangled in the grass and unable to escape sudden death under his feet.

For the valets have nothing against the crickets in the fields
Where nothing ends or defeats
The music of the earth—
Read Keats!
Glorious, undoctrined, undoctored spirit!
Who sang of the grasshopper
But who sang too of the Grecian urn on the mantelpiece
(Or some equivalent of the mantelpiece)—
Sang of the sentimental, artificial scene on the Grecian urn—
More sentimental, more artificial, than the little Dresden shepherdess—
Sang of the artificial Greek heifer lowing at artificial Greek skies.
Boundless poet of Nature
But poet also of all that is beautiful
In the bounded spirit of man—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The most beautiful thing in that spirit being man's art.
His art which is but little pictures
To bring near him the beauty that is far away or beyond him.
Whether it be the little Dresden shepherdess on the mantelpiece,
Or the Grecian urn on its mantelpiece
With its sentimental, artificial heifer lowing at the skies
And at the mystery of sacrifice; or whether it be
The little wooden crucifix, held before dying eyes,
As the hope that, closing on earth,
They will open in paradise.

SOME CHINESE VERSIONS OF WESTERN CLASSICS

MARJORIE LATTA BARSTOW

ONE never really knows the latent possibilities of English literature till one meets it in the wilds of China. Chinese versions of English classics are one degree more astonishing than the Chinese manipulation of the English speech. This is saying a great deal, for there are times when English in China attains to the dignity of literary production. In Huchow a leather dealer triumphantly reared above his shop the sign "Skinny Munitions". This meant "leather goods". It was the fruit of his own unaided study of the dictionary. He was outdone, however, by an itinerant Japanese merchant, who had apparently learned his English from a missionary. The Japanese had acquired some thermos bottles. Wishing to indicate the miraculous twofold power of these inventions to keep ice-water cold, and tea hot, he advertised them as follows: "Icy-hot bottles, warm as the love of God."

The imagination and left-handed logic displayed in the street advertisements finds a wider scope in Chinese versions of English classics. Since the old system of competitive examinations in China has been abolished, the rapid Americanizing of education, under the influence of the missions and the indemnity students, has led to a demand for English books in translation. Many of these are the results of the initiative of private individuals. Some are put out by Chinese publishing-houses; and a continuous flood of them issues from the press of the Christian Literature Society. The Christian Literature Society is an enterprising institution not lacking in spirit and imagination. It is inclined to be a bit didactic, but this suits the genius of the Chinese. Sometimes, too, it makes good evangelical Christians out of the heterodox geniuses of European literature. Among the company of the orthodox it contrives to include some interesting heretics. I remember one—an ex-missionary—who was an industrious purveyor of foreign literature to the Orient. He had abandoned the church because he had decided that it was the masterpiece of the devil. He still said his prayers, though, every

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

night. He prayed that God would destroy the German empire and all ecclesiastical institutions. When I knew him he was engaged in rationalizing biblical stories for oriental consumption. By some literary sleight of hand he succeeded in retailing the story of Jonah and the whale, in such a way as to omit the whale without spoiling the plot.

In general the translations of the Christian Literature Society and of other similar agencies resemble King Alfred's method of serving up Latin classics to his people—with an adorning of the tale and a pointing of the moral. The effect on the reader is deemed of more importance than literal accuracy of rendering. This does not in the least detract from the interest of the translation. Some of the most readable versions in the world have been made after this fashion.

The effect on the reader, however, is something that the occidental mind cannot always foresee. When "Sohrab and Rustum" appeared, an editor of a Chinese paper asked permission to print it in the *religious* section of his magazine, because he found in it such a beautiful ideal of filial devotion. To the disciples of Confucius, filial piety and religion are identical. Again, a Chinese scholar, who was a Christian, refused to turn "The Ancient Mariner" into Chinese because it inculcates excellent Buddhist doctrine. Buddhism is opposed to the taking of animal life in any form. The pictures and colored bas-reliefs of the Buddhist hell in the temples are largely composed of representations of animals graphically avenging themselves upon the men who, in life, had been cruel to them. In the pictures of the Buddhist inferno flesh-eaters fare badly. Men who dined on frogs' legs, like the good Hooverizers in New York hotels, are fried over lively flames by hungry frogs, till they curl up all around the edges and are quite tender; and those who used to like a good beefsteak now and then are butchered and quartered by the spirits of the cattle whose juicy flesh they once consumed. But the good vegetarians are represented as flocking up the heavenly way to paradise on the backs of the grateful birds and beasts which they never ate. All this, of course, is quite in the spirit of "The Ancient Mariner". The stanza "He prayeth best who loveth best" would go to any Buddhist heart. So "The Ancient Mariner" seems painfully heterodox to the Chinese Christian; and the demonology in it may be somewhat obnoxious to a soul which has just escaped from the all-enveloping terrors of the Chinese devil-world.

Again the element of romantic love in European literature makes many a popular foreign song and story highly improper for the prudish ears of Chinese youth. This does not mean that something like romantic love may not exist in China; it is merely etiquette not to mention it. Sometimes Chinese who have learned to like foreign songs are put to difficult straits in the attempt to translate them. In certain schools for girls the tune of "Drink to me only with thine eyes" is used with a paraphrase of that inane bit of verse which begins,

> Down in a shady dell
> A modest violet grew.

A proper Chinese girl is, of course, a modest violet, and would rather die than drink to her warbling lover with her eyes. Doubtless she would return the rosy wreath to the impudent suitor; but she would take good care not to honor it with her breath.

Similarly, the coquettish little poem

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Röslein auf der Heiden" loses all its point in Chinese as the result of an attempt to make it innocuous. The rosebud on the hedge which the saucy boy wishes to pluck, despite the dire threats of the rose to pierce him with her thorns, has become a fair little lily-bud which an emissary of the emperor of heaven wishes to transfer to the imperial garden, just as in the old days a pretty Manchu maid might be asked to become the emperor's secondary wife. In a spirited dialogue the lily-bud at first refuses. She finally yields and is carried off to heaven. Though Goethe himself could never recognize the last stanza, it is nevertheless rather pretty in its Chinese Christian dress. Literally translated from the Chinese, it reads as follows:

In a white jade and gold-flowered vase,
Filled to the brim with the water of life,
Was Lily Fragrant planted by Heaven's Child.
Then was she reverently offered up to the King.
All the King's court was sweet with the fragrance.
The King himself smiled, and, receiving the flower, said:
"Lily, Lily, Lily fragrant,
Thy presence has sweetened the Kingdom of Heaven."

In this case the attempt to translate has really been a stimulus to original composition. This is also true in the Chinese adaption of "Way down upon the Suwanee River". The Chinese version is so far superior to the English in its poetic and pathetic imagery that it is worth while to quote it in full:

Home seems as remote as the edge of Heaven!
Distant as the corner of the earth!
So far away!
My little life is blown hither and thither
Like the tiny wind-blown water algæ spore.
Every night I dream that my foot has turned homeward;
Every day I think of the happiness of home—
Father, mother, brothers, sisters, all together
In the dear old country home,
Surrounded by fields and flowers.
From morning till night my soul is yearning
For the old scenes at home.

CHORUS

Bitter experience has taught me that this world is a cold place.
No matter where I roam no one tries to be friendly.
My heart like an arrow flies toward home.
Yes, that is what I long for—my old home.

I remember, as a little child, how I played in the fields.
Always was the sun shining in those days.
My brothers and little sisters, my young companions,
Laughing, chattering, running through the fields together.
Then I did not know my happiness.
Now that the light is gone I mourn for it.
Oh, that I could see again my dear old mother's compassionate face!
Life, death itself, would seem unimportant.

My home was just a little bamboo hut
With the fields on all four sides,
But in the eye of the mind I always see it.
There are birds flying to and fro.
The butterflies and bees flit from flower to flower.
I, hearing again at dawn the crowing of the cock,
At night the barking of the faithful farm dog.
These are the loved surroundings of my old home.
My heart never stops reminding me of them all.

In many cases there is an attempt to translate literally. The degree of literalness attainable throws an interesting light on the qualities of the books which all our life we have taken for granted. In general, translators told me, it is easier to translate from French than from English, because of the greater clarity of the French style and structure. A Chinese scholar announced with pride that he had been able to translate the little French tale "Picsiola" into Chinese sentence by sentence. He remarked, admiringly, that the story was put together "just like a clock". Not a single detail could be omitted without spoiling the whole. In this respect the Chinese standard is our own classical ideal.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another French story which readily lent itself to translation is that tale which is the model and the despair of American courses in the short story—de Maupassant's "The Necklace". In the Chinese version the scene is laid in Shanghai and the details are Chinese, but the organic structure, the pellucid language, and the universal truth of psychology make the story quite independent of time and place.

Among poets, Longfellow was cited as the one who possesses the clarity of style and thought which makes literal translation easy. The poem "The Arrow and the Song", literally rendered, found delighted Chinese readers. Strangely enough, a poet who is the very antithesis of Longfellow was included with him among the translatable bards. This poet is Browning. The wilfulness of grammar and phrase that troubles the English reader is not so noticeable to one who reads English as a foreign language. In Browning's poetry there is a solid substratum of thought which is independent of style, and which appeals to the sententious and philosophical mind of the Chinese. A few years ago, at Cornell University, the Browning prize was awarded to a Chinese, against several American competitors. An indemnity student, whose favorite poem is "Rabbi Ben Ezra", told me that he thought Browning improved in translation. In Chinese his poems are clearer and more compact.

I thought that Wordsworth ought to be easily translated—because his best poems have a classical simplicity of structure and a genuine substance of thought. This is not the case. The genius of Wordsworth, in his moments of genius, is too delicate, too individual. His subtle and evanescent grace of thought evaporates in the course of translation; it is part and parcel of his own haunting phrase and the imagery peculiar to his own mountain land.

Naturally the least translatable type of poetry is the sugared romance of Tennyson and Swinburne. When one has subtracted the music, the luscious amatory passages, and the expression of a mystical chivalry which has little counterpart in the calm, rationalistic imagination of the Chinese, not much is left. Tennyson's "The Princess", however, has been used with effect by Chinese advocates of the advancement of women.

Among the distinctively Christian propaganda, peculiar success attended a paraphrase of Tolstoi's "Marchez quand vous avez lumière", which appeared in Chinese under the title of "The Five Causes". In the translation the teaching of Confucius is everywhere substituted for the tenets of Greek and Latin philosophy, which, in many respects, it resembles. Just as Tolstoi represents the inadequacy of classical thought versus Christianity, so the book represents the failure of Confucianism to provide the comfort and inspiration of a religion of love. The translation was made for the Christian Literature Society by a Confucian scholar who was opposed to Christianity. In the course of the work he was converted by his own arguments. Now he gives even the un-Christian effusions of western writers a Christian flavor, and sometimes adds to them a distinctly Christian moral.

There are, of course, far more serious and elaborate translations of occidental literature which are undertaken in the spirit of the strictest scholarship, but it is to this naïve absorption and transmutation of foreign thought that we must look for the really vital

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

influence of the West upon the East. These translations present amusing and illuminating parallels to the early contact of Latin literature with the English and Teutonic imagination; and in this case, as in the Middle Ages, the fusing of the ideals of two civilizations is one of the most stimulating by-products of the missionary enterprise. To what original masterpieces this grafting of the vivid flower of western imagination on the solid, ancient stock of Chinese thought may yet lead we cannot tell. Meanwhile these quaint literary hybrids might well startle our interest in the latent qualities of the literature we take for granted.

TRANSLATING LITERATURE INTO LIFE

BY ARNOLD BENNETT

LO, a parable! A certain man, having bought a large, elaborate, and complete manual of carpentry, studied it daily with much diligence and regularity. Now there were no cupboards in his house; his dining-table consisted of an arrangement of orange-boxes, and he had scarcely a chair that was not a menace to the existence of the person who sat upon it. When asked why he did not set to work, and, by applying the principles of the manual, endeavor to improve the conditions of his life and of the lives of his wife and children, he replied that he was a student, and he plunged more deeply than ever into the manual of carpentry. His friends at length definitely came to the conclusion that though he was an industrious student, he was also a hopeless fool.

By which I wish to indicate that there is no virtue in study by itself. Study is not an end but a means. I should blush to write down such a platitude, did I not know by experience that the majority of readers constantly ignore it. The man who pores over a manual of carpentry and does naught else is a fool. But every book is a manual of carpentry, and every man who pores over any book whatever and does naught else with it is—deserving of an abusive epithet. What is the object of reading unless something definite comes of it? You would be better advised to play billiards. Where is the sense of reading history unless you obtain from it a clearer insight into actual politics and render yourself less liable to be duped by the rhetoric of party propaganda? Where is the sense of reading philosophy unless your own attitude toward the phenomena of the universe becomes more philosophical? Where is the sense of reading morals unless your own are improved? Where is the sense of reading biography unless it is going to affect what people will say about *you* after your funeral? Where is the sense of reading poetry or fiction unless you see more beauty, more passion, more scope for your sympathy, than you saw before?

If you boldly answer: "I only read for pleasure", then I retort that the man who drinks whiskey might with force say: "I only drink whiskey for pleasure". And I respectfully request you not to plume yourself on your

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reading, nor expect to acquire merit thereby.

But should you answer: "I do try to translate literature into life", then I will ask you to take down any book at random from your shelves and conduct in your own mind an honest inquiry as to what has been the effect of that particular book on your actual living. If you can put your hand on any subsequent period, or fractional moment, of your life and say: "I acted more wisely then, I wasn't such a dupe then, I perceived more clearly then, I felt more deeply then, I saw more beauty then, I was kinder then, I was more joyous then, I was happier then,—than I should have been if I had not read that book",—if you can honestly say this, then your reading of that book has not been utterly futile. But if you cannot say this, then the chances are that your reading of that book has been utterly futile. The chances are that you have been studying a manual of carpentry while continuing to sit on a three-legged chair and to dine off an orange box.

You say: "I know all that. But it is not so easy to translate literature into life." When I think of the time I have wasted in reading masterpieces, I stand aghast.

The explanation is simple. Idleness, intellectual sloth, is the explanation. Self-conceit is the explanation. If you were invited to meet a great writer, you would brace yourself to the occasion. You would say to yourself: "I must keep my ears open, and my brain wide-awake, so as to miss nothing". You would tingle with your own bracing of yourself. But you—I mean "we"—will sit down to a great book as though we were sitting down to a ham sandwich. No sense of personal inferiority in us! No mood of resolve! No "tuning up" of the intellectual apparatus! But just a casual, easy air, as if saying to the book: "Well, come along, let's have a look at you!"

What is the matter with our reading is casualness, languor, preoccupation. We don't give the book a chance. We don't put ourselves at the disposal of the book. It is impossible to read properly without using all one's engine-power. If we are not tired after reading, common sense is not in us. How should one grapple with a superior and not be out of breath?

But even if we read with the whole force of our brain, and do nothing else, common sense is still not in us, while sublime conceit is. For we are assuming that, without further trouble, we can possess, coordinate, and assimilate all the ideas and sensations rapidly offered to us by a mind greater than our own. The assumption has only to be stated in order to appear in its monstrous absurdity. Hence it follows that something remains to be done. This something is the act of reflection. Reading without subsequent reflection is ridiculous; it is equally a proof of folly and of vanity.

Further, it is a sign of undue self-esteem to suppose that we can grasp the full import of an author's message at a single reading. I would not say that every book worth reading once is worth reading twice. But I would say that no book of great and established reputation is read till it is read at least twice. You can easily test the truth of this by reading again any classic; assuredly you will discover in it excellences which had previously escaped you.

To resume and finish: open a great book in the braced spirit with which you would listen to a great man. Read with the whole of your brain and soul. Tire yourself (would you not

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tire yourself at tennis?). Reflect. After an interval, read again. By this process, and by no other, will a book enter into you, become a part of you, and reappear in your life.

I have been consulted about the practice of making notes. Well, I do not care to offer counsels of perfection. My advice is simply to keep a pencil handy and to write down on a small sheet of paper (or in the inside back-cover if the book belongs to you) the number of the page on which anything has struck you, together with the merest hint, in half a dozen words, of what it was. If you do this, by the time you have finished the book, you will have automatically constructed a table and page-index of its salient points. It is well, of course, to write on the papers the title and author of the work, the name of the edition, and the date of perusal. A collection of these small sheets of paper would constitute a souvenir of one's reading. At the end of each year one might advantageously spend a few shillings in having the year's harvest bound. Say you have read a hundred books. A hundred uniform leaves would make a respectable volume, whose interest and utility I need not insist upon. A row of such volumes would really amount to the secret history of one's life.

COMPARISON

BY RUTH LAMBERT JONES

YOU say: "How tiring it must be
To weave new ballads constantly!"

I cry: "What weariness must sway
One who plants gardens all the day!"

Yet I don't tire of making songs
Nor does your sowing weary you,
Because each to his task belongs
And does what he loves well to do.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"THE PEOPLE'S THEATRE" AND THE PEOPLED THEATRE

BY WALTER PRICHARD EATON

TWO books lie before me, quite different in character and yet both leading to the same somewhat melancholy reflections. They are Barrett H. Clark's translation of Romain Rolland's "The People's Theater", and Constance D'Arcy Mackay's "Patriotic Drama in Your Town". One, the work of a profound radical and great creative artist, is based on the fundamental assumption of class consciousness, and seeks to show the almost complete unfitness of the current theatrical repertoire for the needs of "the people". The other, the American work, is based, apparently, on a serene disregard (or ignorance) of class consciousness, and the assumption that a so-called little theatre in your town may be the center of a unifying art movement which shall unite all the peoples in the joyous bond of Thomas Wood Stevens, Ibsen and Percy Mackaye.

When, in the first three years of this century, Rolland wrote the papers now gathered in the present volume, he was greatly interested in the various projects then being agitated (or even tried) in France, to give to the people their own theatre. With lucid common sense, he realized that the French classic drama bored these people (as it has bored others, not laborers!); that the French romantic drama was inflated hokum (including the plays of Rostand); that the boulevard drama was an art essentially for a degenerate bourgeoisie; and even the modern social dramas of men like Brieux and Hauptmann have both an ephemeral quality, due to the impermanence of their themes, and, moreover, are usually directed rather at the well-to-do. The manufacturers may profit by "The Weavers", for instance, but it's rather tough on the workers to ask them to contemplate their woes in the very theatre.

Accordingly, Rolland was forced to condemn a good part of the people's theatre efforts of his day, and to outline what he conceived should be the lines of the new drama. First, the people's theatre "must be a recreation". It must give "a sort of physical and moral rest to the workingman, weary from his day's work". Second, "the theatre ought to be a source of energy"—that is, it should show action on large and inspiring lines. Third, it should be "a guiding light to the intelligence". "It should flood with light the terrible brain of man, which is filled with shadows and monsters, and is exceeding narrow and cramped."

To fulfill these requisites of joy, energy and intelligence, it would seem that Rolland dreamed of great, poetic melodramas, "Hamlets" and "King Learys" and "Othellos" written by Frenchmen in modern idiom; of historical plays showing crowds, especially, as the heroes; and of social plays, rustic dramas, folk-legends, and pantomime and music. In practice, he endeavored himself to meet the need,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

producing "Danton" and other like dramas, which, unfortunately, fail for lack of dramatic structure. But his book of criticism and theory remains a masterwork of common sense interpenetrated with the noblest idealism, save that he fails to take sufficient account of the most important element —the actual desires of the workers themselves, their line of self-development.

Miss Mackay's slender volume, on the other hand, while it pretends to be little more than a working sketch to aid those ardent souls who wish by means of community pageants, little theatres, and the like, to foster local unity and aid both in the "Americanization" process and in the development of dramatic taste, is oddly deficient in common sense—or, let us say, in common experience. Writing in the heat of war, when "national unity" was a phrase on all lips, it is perhaps understandable that the author should have been carried away; but already the war is over, and as we return to more ordinary conditions we are again faced by the grim fact that the so-called little theatres, for instance, are in almost every instance thoroughly aristocratic institutions; that in a town like Northampton, where for six years there has existed a semi-municipal theatre, not a baker's dozen of the proletariat ever darken its doors, in spite of heroic efforts by the management to reach them; finally, that the very often considerable civic benefits of widely participated-in pageants and festivals are, essentially, civic benefits and cannot honestly be traced into the subsequent dramatic art-life of the people.

Anything more boring to the people than perpetual pageants, or some of those historical recitation-tableaux outlined by our author, could not well be imagined, unless it were certain of the dramas she suggests the little theatre companies should take about to various halls, steps, and open-air theatres. It is extremely laudable to wish to "Americanize" all our population, and to usher in universal democracy by means of pageants about George Washington. But the stubborn fact remains that "the people" desire much more to be amused, to enjoy themselves, and unless the theatre vitally reaches them as a part of their spontaneous amusement life, it is merely beating the air.

It reduces itself to this—probably in France as well as here: the *people's theatre will never come unless it rises from the people.* It cannot be lowered to them from above. You will never get them into your existing theatres, even, and still less into your independent and aristocratic art theatres, until the themes and atmosphere of the plays there are the themes and atmosphere of their own lives (which will never be, of course, under the existing social order). To take these plays down to them will only be to bore and offend them. To take *any* plays down to them will not work.

As a matter of sad fact, they already have their theatre in America—a terrible thing, it is, but their own, though shared by the less intelligent of the class above them—the movies. The neighborhood movie house is the people's theatre. Whether we like it or not (and no sane person can contemplate the prospect calmly), it will remain the people's theatre until the people themselves decree a change. That will not be until they have greatly improved their economic condition and consequently their educational condition, removing as well their deep-rooted hostility to anything patronized and perpetuated by the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"upper crust". The present writer has a great love of the pageant as an art-form, and a great hope of the little theatres as torch bearers of the finer drama. But of either of them as a democratizing force, under present social conditions, he has, alas! no hope whatever.

Professor William Lyon Phelps, a critic who never permits subtleties to interfere with enthusiasms, in his new book, "The Twentieth Century Theatre", is not at all concerned with getting "the people" to appreciate great drama. He seems to feel that there is quite enough to do in getting our present bourgeois audiences to appreciate it! In fact, he doesn't seem to feel that even our critics appreciate it. We are, he says, living in the period of the greatest dramatic products since Shakespeare, while the actual theatre, outside of a few large cities (New York alone in America, he says, though we would add Chicago), is pitifully unable to show the public any of this splendid stage literature. He is concerned with the reorganization of our present playhouse in order to give a wider hearing to our present available repertoire, and in order to train actors once more, through the medium of repertoire companies, into something like their old-time competence.

Yet one point he makes is perhaps a more significant hint for those who dream of "Americanization" and democracy than any suggested pageants and municipal hand-outs. He says, most truly, that a tremendous drawback to our present system is the fact that a new play is produced by one company only, in one place, instead of by two hundred or three hundred companies all over the country. Should a significant and stimulating American drama find its way to the stage, it would spend a year in New York, and then slowly, very slowly, percolate through the country. He might have added that today it would never get beyond a limited number of cities. This not only robs the country of the stimulus of discussing the same thing at the same time, giving us all an art consciousness, but it reduces all the rest of the country to a state where it meekly accepts New York verdicts and lacks all power of individual judgment. The remedy, of course, is the establishment of resident repertoire companies in all cities.

This hint, however, is but one of many in a chatty, informal, rather unformal, but wise and stimulating book.

When two comedians of such personal charm and technical skill as Cyril Maude and Miss Laura Hope Crews act a new play, it is not always easy, even for the trained critic, to say just how much of the effect of lifelike character they convey is due to the author and how much to the players. It is, therefore, with peculiar interest that we turn to the printed text of C. Haddon Chambers's comedy, "The Saving Grace". Our youngsters would call it old-fashioned—it even opens with a scene between the servants! That is pretty hard to forgive, just as it is hard to forgive the transparency of the conclusion, sensed almost from the start. We are in the play-world of sentimental comedy.

Yet Mr. Chambers, practical hand though he be in the elder tricks of the trade (the drama has its tricks, also!), possesses two traits which are neither old nor new, but timeless. He has charm, and he has a sense of character. Even in reading the bald text, with its old-fashioned stage directions ("crosses left", "exit R. U. E."—so crude in comparison with a Shaw or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a Barrie stage direction), you feel the quaint, sweet charm of the humorless wife, the quaint and slightly acid charm of the humorous husband who is too much of a gentleman to be wholly admirable, and too much of a gentleman to lose our respect and regard, and altogether and subtly British—which, even more than his humor, is his "saving grace". A dramatist may open his play with a dozen servants delivering the exposition, and we shall not greatly care, so long as he can bring on such delightfully studied and unflaggingly sustained living characters as these.

In the second volume of his "library edition" of the major works of Pinero, Clayton Hamilton presents "The Gay Lord Quex" and "Iris". Mr. Hamilton's enthusiasm for Pinero is almost unbounded, and leads him into curious excesses. One of them is his admiration for the "great" third act of "The Gay Lord Quex". He regards it as a tremendous and never-to-be-too-much-studied feat of technical dexterity, and so it seemed to us eighteen years ago, when we saw John Hare and Irene Vanbrugh play it. But today we are disposed to say that any study of it is too much. Our dramatists do not, and perhaps never have, needed that kind of dexterity. What they need is utterly to forget it. Far rather, for their souls' good and ours, would we send them to study the placid character drawing of "The Saving Grace". This "great" act is simply the Gallic "spiral stairway" climax, the "winding up", by cumulative suspense and surprise, to the final astonishment, the wooden, artificial trickery of "the well-made play", so called, no doubt, because it is generally so badly made from the higher view. Compared with the technical dexterity of J. M. Barrie, say, in indicating by a few vivid strokes, partly of pantomime, the whole tragic renunciation of Crichton and the whole philosophic import of the drama, in Act III of "The Admirable Crichton", this act of Pinero's is mere showman's work. It is the work of the "play builder", not the creative dramatic artist.

On the other hand, "Iris" still impresses the reader as an honest and relentless, though at times crude, study of a weak woman, and its conclusion is still dreadfully satisfactory. Mr. Hamilton hints that it has never been played. I did not see Fay Davis as Iris, but it is certainly true that in America Miss Harned failed of the possibilities, though Oscar Ashe's Maldonado was one of the memorable performances of our generation. With "The Thunderbolt", this drama stands up above the bulk of Pinero's work, possessing together with his careful, solid, often too rigid carpentry, a sense of worlds beyond the theatre and the awful shadow of actual life. It deserves study, and a revival on the stage.

The shadow of actual life does not perceptibly darken the door of Philip Moeller's study when he sits down to write a "somewhat historical play". Five of these plays from his pen, all in one act, and four familiar in the repertoire of the Washington Square Players, are now published in a single volume. History, to Moeller, is merely an excuse for a burlesque. He would have been a capital librettist for Offenbach, and if we now had a lyric stage he would certainly adorn it. "Helena's Husband" (a burlesque on Helen of Troy), familiar not only to patrons of the Washington Square Players but by this time to patrons of nearly all the little theatres in the land, is as youth-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fully high-spirited, irreverent, keen, witty, satirical and theatrically effective as any one-act play of its kind ever written in this country. The theme so dear to American burlesque writers of seventy-five years ago, Pocahontas, is not so happily handled, but in "The Roadhouse in Arden", mingling with the absurdities of an aged Hamlet wedded to a decaying Cleopatra as innkeepers, and Shakespeare and Bacon as guests, is a strain of real poetic fancy, a laughing, bantering flash of symbolism, which is odd and delightful.

Certain of the other skits are not without a touch of the Greenwich Village lack of reticence in speech, but all of them show adroitness, wit, theatrical sense, and a unifying idea. When the Washington Square Players could give us work like this, we realize anew the pity of their enforced closing. Our "commercial" theatre offers us nothing whatever to match it in kind, and precious little in quality.

The People's Theater. By Romain Rolland, translated by Barrett H. Clark. Henry Holt and Co.

Patriotic Drama in Your Town. By Constance D'Arcy Mackay. Henry Holt and Co.

The Twentieth Century Theatre. By William Lyon Phelps. The Macmillan Co.

The Saving Grace. By C. Haddon Chambers. Brentano's.

The Social Plays of Arthur Wing Pinero, Vol. II (The Gay Lord Quex and Iris). E. P. Dutton and Co.

Five Somewhat Historical Plays. By Philip Moeller. Alfred A. Knopf.

VAN NOPPEN, HOMER OF OUR FLEET

BY BENJAMIN DE CASSERES

THE Great War was in a sense a poets' war. No sooner had the German legions begun their march toward the graveyard of the Marne through Belgium, than a German poet hurled his "Hymn of Hate" at the world. It was answered by Emile Verhaeren, Belgium's greatest poet and one of the greatest of all time, with a defiance written in blood with a sword. Gabriele D'Annunzio hurried from Paris to his beloved Italy, and with poems that set the very craters of Vesuvius on fire he mobilized the soul of his countrymen and seated, miraculously, millions of peasants on the bare back of Pegasus.

France sent her poets to the front to a man, and few returned, for a real poet, like Byron at Missolonghi, always meets the Pale Horse half way, with a song on his lips. Remy de Gourmont, exquisite fabricator of "Litanies of the Rose", was struck down at home by psychic concussion. He died of grief because his sword was only a pen. Rupert Brooke, no longer singing songs of wasted love and annihilations, rose to glory in the trap at Gallipoli. Alan Seeger, an American of the Foreign Legion, went to his "rendezvous with Death" with an ecstatic light in his eye. Joyce Kilmer forged his immortality in his hot and buoyant young manhood with singing shells. Lord Dunsany, Irish fabulist, was twice wounded before he quit. Where there are ideals there are always poets who strip to the waist to die for them. For great poetry, like great love, is sib to Death.

"The Challenge", by Lieutenant Leonard Van Noppen, has just been issued in London and will soon be published in this country. It contains one hundred and twenty-six sonnets

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(many of which were originally published in the "Evening Sun" "Sun Dial" column); "A Prophecy", a fragment taken from his tremendous "Armageddon: A Symphonic Drama of Evolution", written in 1911; and two concluding poems, "To These Lost at Sea" and "Abraham Lincoln". The sonnets are dedicated to Josephus Daniels and Lord Northcliffe, and the fragment "A Prophecy" to Lloyd George.

These poems are being hailed in England by the press and the intellectual public as the greatest on the world-tragedy, and among the greatest that have ever appeared in the language. Thomas Hardy, Lord Dunsany, Sydney Brooks, Laurence Binyon and Louis Raemaekers have written eulogistically of them.

Lieutenant Leonard Van Noppen, U. S. N. R., is now stationed in London, assistant attaché of the U. S. S. Melville, flagship. He is a native of North Carolina, of old Dutch American stock. His life has been a long series of physical and intellectual adventures; he is a man who lives for the sake of tasting life in all its attributes. He has taken for his motto from the day he graduated from the University of North Carolina the profound saying of Goethe, "The sense of life is life itself". Philosopher, poet, athlete, epigrammatist, a friend of kings, presidents, anarchists and journalists, his one theme is man, and the epic of him on the planet earth.

Twenty years ago he astounded the literary world of two hemispheres by translating "Lucifer" from the original Dutch of Von Vondel, the Dutch Milton. In this work appeared those series of deadly parallels between "Lucifer" and the "Paradise Lost" of Milton in which the author showed by the most irrefragable evidence how the English poet had "cribbed" whole pages from Von Vondel, putting John Milton among the greatest literary plagiarists of all time. Mayo W. Hazeltine gave up his whole page in the Sunday "Sun" to a review and exposition of this great translation of the Dutch classic and the stark evidence of Milton's "lifts".

When the United States entered the war Lieutenant Van Noppen was Wilhelmina Professor of Dutch Literature in Columbia University. A born poet —a poet's poet, a poet each minute of his life—he immediately offered his services to Secretary Daniels and was sent on a secret mission to the Hague. He is said to have done "big work" there—and we believe that is putting it mildly, for a more serenely fearless man than Lieutenant Van Noppen does not exist.

The genius of Van Noppen is romantic and ironic. Like D'Annunzio, he is a born singer. Like Victor Hugo, he knows the tremendous power of words. Like Swift, he can smash a man in a single line. In these sonnets there are hundreds of lines and images that bite like acid. Always absolute master of his pen, he hurls his hate at Prussia or swells with grief over the spectacle of human stupidity. Here are three sonnets:

THE CHALLENGE

Upon this age, to honour dead and cold,
O poet, breathe thy spirit. Let the warm
White flame of prophecy and the wild charm
Of simple music make thee stern and bold.
We need the eagle's passion and the old
Heroic anger—need the Titan's arm
And tongues like ringing trumpets to alarm
Our sleeping gods, lulled with a lie of gold.
It is not peace is needed, but a sword!
It is not peace. Against the kings of wrong
Hurl singing armies with such power of song
That their proud walls shall topple, and the strong
Be strong no more! Yea, with sublime accord
Challenge the world, ye prophets of the Lord!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PRUSSIAN SPIDER

With myriad eyes, and every eye a spy,
He glared malignant from his web, his prey,
All unsuspecting, for they thought it play,
This constant interweaving of the lie
Into a net, where only theories die,
And vain philosophies. Yet day by day
The threads grew stronger, and he longed to slay
In his strong snare each nation like a fly.

And one was caught; no, two, within his coils
Are struggling blindly. Belgium gives her youth,
And Serbia is bleeding in the toils;
And then a wind,—it was the breath of Truth—
Snapped all the threads. And Liberty's white light
Lives where that Spider spun his inner night.

"WHAT ART THOU, MAN?"

What art thou, man? And why art thou so proud,
Since thou art dust, and thy desiring will
Is in God's pulse no more than a brief thrill?
What art thou, pilgrim, tented in a cloud,
Whose goings and whose comings are so loud?
And all to end in silence. Thou must fill
The hunger of the grave; and to the chill
Darkness of death thou farest in a shroud.

Who art thou? Builder of time's futile towers
Upon foundations that are sinking sand;
Seeing that hope but leads thy morning hours
To the long shadows of the evening land.
Who art thou, giver of resplendent feasts?
The apex of a pyramid of beasts!

Lieutenant Van Noppen has been some twenty years on his titanic poem "Armageddon" (he was the first to reuse the word in modern times and it was from a prospectus of the poem published some years ago that Mr. Roosevelt adapted his famous slogan), and when it gets finally into print it will rank in sheer poetic grandeur with the great epics of all time. The fragment "The Prophecy", published in this volume, is a treasure house of lyrical beauty and sublime figuration.

Milton, Shakespeare, and Shelley are Van Noppen's psychic "controls" plus his own vision of that "far-off divine event" which Poe adumbrated in "Eureka". The scenes of "The Prophecy" are laid in heaven and hell, and, raised to the nth dimension of poetic imagination, limn the Great War, which is far from its ending, although the siege guns are silent. The spiritual Marnes and economic Piaves are ahead.

"The Challenge" is not a book but, paraphrasing the London "Times's" review of it, it is a Niagara of diamonds.

The Challenge. By Lt. Leonard Van Noppen. London: Elkin Mathews.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE DEEPER ROOTS OF THE RUSSIAN THEATRE

BY OLIVER M. SAYLER

ONE of the best of all reasons why the Russian theatre has survived political and even social revolution is that its roots strike deeply and firmly into the past. Its birth, along with the other Russian arts, out of the womb of a people's sorrow, helps explain why it persists supreme among modern theatres in spite of the chaos and the anxiety and the bitterness of class struggle. To its spiritual consolation and its honest vision, the nation turns in the days of its deeper sorrow. And yet, rich as it has been in performing this service, it probably would not have borne the shock of the Terror if it had not been grounded for generations in the minds and affections of all Russians.

For us to think of the Russian theatre in terms of generations requires something of a mental wrench. The Moscow Art Theatre we know by rumor, and the Russian Ballet by its pleasant dalliance on our shores. But the former was created out of Stanislavsky's dream in our own time, and the latter startled the world only from the moment Isadora Duncan rekindled its flame. The Russian theatre seems to us like the newest theatre in the world. Instead, its genealogy is from Pushkin and Griboyedoff, from Gogol and Ostrovsky as playwrights, and from Motchaloff, tragedian, and Shchepkin, comedian, as players. For a hundred years it has been the secure refuge of Russian genius from the oppression of reaction and autocracy.

The continuation today of this elder tradition of the Russian theatre, the flower of these roots, is the Small State Theatre in Moscow, home of the Russian classic drama. Small it is only by comparison with its partner in governmental subsidies, the Great State Theatre, guardian of opera and the ballet, for it seats at least a thousand people and its stage is larger than its auditorium. Its age-yellowed exterior stands unobtrusive guard over the east side of the Theatre Place, a stone's throw from the imposing Doric portico of the Great Theatre. Inside, balustrades and corridors of masonry lead to an interior of red and gold and plush and draperies. Tradition sits down beside you in your seat. Flavor of men and manners of other years crosses the footlights without a shock, for you yourself in the brief interval since you left the anxious turmoil of today's out-of-doors have been led back into the mood of other years. I wish we had a single theatre like this for our Shakespeare and for the rest of our less hardy but still picturesque classic drama. The proponents of experiment and the New Theatre would not be interested in it, but we should then know, as Russia knows, the tenacious virility of the past and the leavening power of tradition.

My host in Moscow was one of those who believed passionately in these elder values, and so, though my own inclination carried me oftener to the middle-aged Art Theatre, already settling into its own tradition, and to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the youthful theatres of artistic revolt, I was not permitted for long to forget the quiet and unobtrusive dignity of the Small State Theatre. Vladimir Tardoff, too, a newspaper friend with tastes similar to my own, warned me, in my quest for the new and the strange, not to neglect the home of the classic drama.

There you will find Ostrovsky handed down in unbroken succession from the mid-nineteenth century. With Gogol and Griboyedoff a still elder tradition is preserved. And there, too, you will see how the Russian has welcomed into his repertory the best of the drama of western Europe, from Molière and Shakespeare down to Ibsen. In the political terminology of today, the Small State Theatre stands on the extreme right in matters of art, preserving and guarding, modestly but earnestly, the humanism of the past. And over its affairs one of the finest spirits in all Russian art today presides, Prince Alexander Ivanovitch Sumbatoff.

Accordingly, with Tardoff's card, I sought the prince at home and in the playhouse. The derangement of the theatre's plans by the Bolshevik Revolution made the prince a very busy man and hard to find. It was only after a most cordial correspondence in French that our trails met one evening between the acts in his own private greenroom which opened off his loge. Already he had arranged with the doorkeepers that I should come at will and sit with my interpreter in the front row of chairs placed in a slight depression between the first row of the parterre and the edge of the apron and denoted the "orchestra", although no musical diversion ever breaks the continuity of a Russian dramatic performance. The seats were not the best in the house, but they were the only ones readily and invariably at his disposal, for the entire auditorium with the exception of this orchestra was often reserved by subscription. And so almost his first words after our meeting were an apology for the arrangements he had made for me.

"It doesn't matter!" I said in all sincerity. "I am at home anywhere in the theatre."

Instantly, his all-enclosing hand reached across the table and gripped mine in earnest sympathy, for he, too, has been at home "anywhere in the theatre" ever since as a boy in the First Gymnasium of Tiflis he was drawn to the stage.

Alexander Ivanovitch is a prince of the Caucasus. He was born September 17, 1857, into one of the oldest families of Georgia on the estate of his mother in the Government of Tula, south of Moscow. He entered the law school of the University of Petrograd in 1877, but immediately on his graduation in 1881 he turned to the stage and joined the company of Brenko's Pushkin Theatre in Moscow. F. A. Korsh, whose red brick playhouse is still one of the landmarks of Moscow's dramatic life, was just completing his institution at that time, and on the closing of the Pushkin Theatre, Sumbatoff joined the ranks of Korsh. The same year he was invited without trial by the *régisseur* Potiehin to the Small Imperial Theatre of Moscow; and there on September 12, 1882, he made his first appearance as Tchatsky in the finest example of classic Russian comedy, Griboyedoff's "Gore ot Uma". And there he has played and perfected his art as comedian and tragedian for thirty-seven years, except when the entire company left Moscow for one of its infrequent guest tours to Petrograd or to the provincial cities or even so far afield as Belgrade, Serbia, in 1900.

As player and playwright, Prince Sumbatoff uses the stage name Youzhin, but he is known and loved throughout Russia by his given name, Alexander Ivanovitch. He began to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

write for the theatre while he was still a student in the university and his first play, "The Lightning Rod", was produced with success in 1878 by the Moscow Artistic Circle. His next, "Rustling Leaves", was first played October 14, 1881, at the Small Imperial Theatre in Moscow, and the following season at the Alexandrinsky in Petrograd. "Sergei Satiloff" followed in 1883, but although it is published in his works the censor denied it performance. Other plays followed in rapid succession, presented both in Moscow and Petrograd: "The Husband of a Celebrity", 1884; "The Arkazoff's", 1886; "The Chains", 1888; "Tsar Ivan IV", in verse, 1890; "Olden Times", 1895; "The Gentleman", 1897; "The Sunset", 1899, and "The Commune of Iron", 1901. He has continued his composition in later years but with less frequency and I have no complete list. His "Night Birds" was in the repertory of the Small State Theatre during the winter of 1917-18. A record kept until 1901 showed a total of over 6,000 performances of his various plays in the theatres throughout Russia, and that sum must have been more than doubled by today. Several of his plays have been translated into Polish, Czech, Serbian, German, and French. As a playwright, Youzhin has followed in the realistic tradition of Ostrovsky, in whose comedies he has so often appeared at the Small State Theatre. The background of their action is sometimes the life of provincial actors, sometimes that of the impoverished nobility, and sometimes that of the modern Russian merchant.

I asked Alexander Ivanovitch one afternoon in his modest apartment, enriched with rare rugs and hangings from the Caucasus and beyond, what was his favorite rôle in the hundreds he had played, and before I could stop his eager catalogue he had named a dozen out of Shakespeare and Schiller and Hugo. I know he takes great delight in Shylock, which I saw him play twice in a finely flavored production of "The Merchant of Venice" staged in the conventional manner. His Jew is one of great dignity and self-command, the embodiment of the hatred and vengeance of an oppressed race. Outward good-will and inward revenge gleam alternately from his eyes when he agrees to the bond. His eyes are eloquent, too, after Jessica's flight—set and glazed as he looks toward the sky with something of the wounded patriarch about him. His finest moments, though, come in the fourth act, as they should. I have never seen Shylock face his expected triumph more proudly. He stands like a pillar, arms folded, while the doge outlines the case. His knife he removes from the sheath with a jerk, his eyes glitter as he sharpens it, he tests it with a hair from his beard, and then he utters a word of lip prayer before he faces the court. He is stunned at first by the verdict, but turns with quivering arms for his appeal to the doge, falling forward prostrate at the end. His departure is in silence, head bowed—a broken man and a truly tragic figure who has appealed to the emotions through the intellect rather than through the emotions direct.

Another rôle that gives him joy is, rather strangely, that of Bolingbroke in Scribe's "Le Verre d'Eau". The play is artifice and pasteboard to the last line, but like all Scribe, it is exultingly of the theatre theatrical, and that quality, I suppose, commends it to Youzhin's affection; for there is in him a strain of the old-time actor who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

loves the theatre for its own sake, with all its strut and fret, regardless of its contact with life.

As a true artist, Youzhin likes to match himself against others, and so at alternate performances of "The Merchant", Ossip Andreievitch Pravdin is the Shylock, making him the personification of individual hatred rather than of racial vengeance as that of Youzhin. Pravdin's service at the Small State Theatre antedates even that of Youzhin, for the fortieth anniversary of that service was celebrated while I was in Moscow. This sharp-eyed, gruff-voiced but kindly old actor and artist made his debut in the theatre at Helsingfors, Finland, in 1869 at the age of twenty. After that, he played comic old men in Tiflis, Kieff, and various cities until the great Shumsky discovered him and brought him to Moscow to appear on private stages. On Shumsky's death in 1878, Pravdin followed him at the Small State Theatre where he has played and taught in the theatre school ever since.

There are many other fine figures in the company at the Small Theatre, bridging several generations of Russian dramatic genius. Yermolova, *grande dame* of the Russian stage, is accounted its leading actress, though she seldom plays any more. Sadovskaya, eldest scion of a family which compares with the Booths and the Drews and the Barrymores in its service in the Russian theatre, still preserves a keen sense of the droll and the comic, and counts those who love her from playgoers of her own advanced age down to the children. Lyeshkovskaya, though a younger actress, is yet of Youzhin's era. Aidaroff is equally able as actor and producer. Yablotchkina and Lenin—no relative of the Bolshevik premier—are in their prime. Sadovsky III, son of Sadovskaya, and Maximoff are perhaps the most promising of the young men, while the theatre's ablest actresses of the younger generation are Shchepkina, heiress of the traditions of another great acting family, and Gzovskaya.

Only one new production has been made at the Small State Theatre since the Revolution, a double bill, including Oscar Wilde's "Salomé" and "A Florentine Tragedy"—the former, by the way, wholly missing the passionate import of the drama, while the latter sought out accurately and conveyed vividly the almost Greek simplicity of its sombre story. But, like the Art Theatre and all the other Russian playhouses, the Small Theatre had only to delve into its rich repertory to find old plays that are always new. Ready to the reviving hands of its directors were all the varied dramatic works of that peculiar possession of its storied stage, Alexander Nikolaievitch Ostrovsky—history, satire and fancy. Equally ready were the plays of Tolstoi, while from western literatures came trooping from their storehouse the plays of Shakespeare, Molière, and Scribe. In addition to the Shakespeare and the Wilde which I have recorded, I saw during the winter of 1917-18 Ostrovsky's "Wolves and Sheep" and "Truth is Good but Luck is Better" and "Vassilisa Melientieva"; Lyoff Tolstoi's "The Fruits of Enlightenment"; and Scribe's "Le Verre d'Eau". Other engagements prevented me from seeing three of Ostrovsky's masterpieces "The Thunderstorm", "Frenzied Finance", and "Voevoda", and Molière's "School for Husbands", which were in the season's repertory.

But chief of them all, chief, I am inclined to believe, among the entire

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

range of the Russian classic drama, was that fine and sensitive flower of Russian culture, Griboyedoff's "Gore ot Uma". If I had seen nothing on Youzhin's stage except the four acts of its tender but searching insight into life, I would have known the secret of the deeper roots of the Russian theatre. The play's title defies adequate translation into English. "Ill Luck from Sense", it is, literally, but that will never do. "The Woes of Wisdom", someone has called it, with resultant moving-picture connotations. The French are more successful, with "Mal de Trop d'Esprit". For myself, I prefer a paraphrase rather than a translation, and I like to call it "The Sorrows of the Spirit", for that seems somehow to convey the mood of the play, a finely balanced adjustment of intellect and sentiment.

In less honest hands than those of Alexander Sergeievitch Griboyedoff, "The Sorrows of the Spirit" would savor of precious intellect and false sentiment. Even its artistic honesty might not be proof against the interpretation of artists less honest than Youzhin and his players. In fact, the presence in the ensemble of one of the few pieces of really bad acting I saw in an important rôle in a leading theatre during my entire winter in Russia, showed how dependent the play is on the sympathy and understanding and sincerity with which it is presented; for it was this blemish rather than the Art Theatre's superiority in managing the crowded reception scene in the third act which made the younger institution's production of the same play more satisfactory in spite of Youzhin's masterly performance of Famusoff, and in spite of the fitness of seeing a play of a century ago in a playhouse of its own era.

The clash of education and cosmopolitan views against the stupidities of daily life in an isolated civilization and the power of the latter to smother and override the former, is the theme of "The Sorrows of the Spirit". Alexander Andreievitch Tchatsky is the young man whose homecoming brings such bitter disillusioning. Before his exit into the world, he had loved Sophia—daughter of Famusoff, a substantial type of higher official in Moscow. On his return, he seeks her out, less in passion, one feels, than from self-respect, only to find that she has forgotten him for the philandering secretary of her father, Moltchalin. He seems unable, however, to accept this plausible incident in a complacent, animal-like existence such as the social leaders of Moscow lived a century ago; and instead of withdrawing immediately to the isolation which his own development has builded round him, he remains to cross verbal swords with Famusoff and his friends, criticising Moscow, "where the houses are new and the prejudices ancient", the perpetual balls, the verses inscribed in albums, the celebrities of the English Club, the language "Franco-Nizhni-Novgorodian". Tchatsky only gets himself well disliked for his pains and in the end finds himself charged even with an unbalanced mind. Thus does complacency protect itself from its critics. In the end, after protecting Sophia from scandal at his own expense, he exclaims: "Away from Moscow! I shall never return again. Somewhere in the world I shall try to find a corner for my wounded feelings"; and he calls his carriage.

Tchatsky has been seen by those who doubt Russia's moral fibre and constructive power as a kind of Russian Hamlet, the embodiment of an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inhibited will power, national in scope. To the extent that he is faithful to the inability of the Russian to persist practically in an effort to achieve by slow degrees some desired change, there may be a measure of truth in such an interpretation. The whole point of the play is missed, however, if we do not see how Griboyedoff, as artist rather than as propagandist, used Tchatsky for the purpose of laying bare the sophistry and shallowness and complacency of the social fabric of his time. The fact that "The Sorrows of the Spirit" is more highly regarded in Russia today than when it was written is proof to me that Russian life has moved far from that period of smug isolation, and that the fine ideals of Tchatsky stir a responsive chord in the public mind and heart which will rebuild Russia anew out of her present ruins.

According to Pushkin and other friends of Griboyedoff, Tchatsky is autobiographical in his rôle of critic. The playwright, born January 17, 1795, traveled abroad and was in government service for a while in Persia, meeting his death at Teheran when a mob stormed the embassy February 11, 1829. "The Sorrows of the Spirit" is the single work by which he will be remembered, although he wrote also of the Orient. The idea for the play came to him in 1812, but he did not begin work on it until 1816. Two years later at the age of twenty-three he had completed two acts, but the play was not finished until 1824. It encountered the snares of the censorship from the start. In 1825, two parts of it were printed, but it was not played, even in a modified form, until 1831, two years after the playwright's death. All of it but a few portions was printed in 1833, but the work in its entirety, both as book and as stage play, had to wait the liberal period of the reign of Tsar Alexander II in 1860.

Two actors—Motchaloff, tragedian, and Shchepkin, comedian—founded the fame and the tradition of the Small State Theatre early in the last century. The present building was not erected until 1841, but their influence had already established the tendencies which were to differentiate the Russian theatre of the nineteenth century from that of western Europe. While English and French stages were still obsessed with the old, false pseudo-classicism of declamation, the theatre in Moscow under the guidance of Motchaloff and Shchepkin had cast aside these artificialities and had created a new art characterized by simplicity, lifelikeness, and sincerity of execution. Through this movement, the Russian theatre of the nineteenth century linked itself closely with the creators of Russian literature, Pushkin, Gogol, Griboyedoff, and Bielinsky; with the Moscow University of the epoch of Granovsky; and finally and mainly with the whole texture of Russian life. This contact with life has never since been lost, for the Russian theatre had entered into life not as an artificial appendage or addition, but as a composite part of its organism. Nowhere else in the world today, except perhaps in Japan and China, is the theatre so firmly anchored in the habits and the affections of the people as it is in Russia.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Small Theatre reaped the fruits of the example of the instruction of Motchaloff and Shchepkin. The fecund pen of Ostrovsky produced a constant stream of works of the first rank for the use of its artists, and the theatre thrived under this incentive just as the Art Theatre found

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stimulus and inspiration in the successive works of Anton Tchekhov during its birth years from 1898 to 1904. The company's roster was studded with the names of such masters of the theatre as Sadovsky, Shumsky, Samarin, Zhivokiny, Fedotova, Vassilieva, Miedviedieva, and Nikulina. The comedy of manners was their forte—Ostrovsky first, and then western European comedy with Molière at its head. They used to say in Moscow, "Sadovsky without Ostrovsky and Ostrovsky without Sadovsky are inconceivable", and that Shumsky in Molière surpassed the artists of the Comédie Française.

Little by little, however, under the influence of bureaucratic administration, the commonplace work of such play tinkers as Kruiloff (not the fable writer), Diatchenko, and Tarnovsky crept into the repertory in the form of made-over plays from the French; and yet, side by side with mediocrity, the finer traditions of the theatre were kept alive by a younger generation of players from whom fame singled out for especial attention Yermolova, Lyeshkovskaya, Sadovsky, Youzhin, and Pravdin—all of them still with the company; and Lyensky, Goryeff, Maksheieff, Ribakoff, Sadovsky II, Akimova, and Muzil. Under the impulse of this brilliant group, the old classic tragedy was restored to the repertory alongside the continuing Ostrovsky, and the striking tragic powers of Youzhin, Lyensky, and Goryeff found expression in the plays of Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Goethe, Schiller, Hugo, and Pushkin. The last quarter of the century, therefore, set a new mark for the theatre and the repertory reached its greatest breadth. About 1900, however, death and illness weakened the company and the autocracy increased its interference, and so the Small Theatre went into eclipse for almost a decade behind the looming figure of the newly born Moscow Art Theatre. In 1908, Youzhin was forced into leadership by public opinion against the official antagonism, and, profiting by the example of the Art Theatre's thoroughness, he has restored the state institution in a period of ten years to its elder glory.

The Revolution of March, 1917 found the theatre ready to take advantage of freedom to consolidate in the hands of the artists themselves the powers yielded by the passing bureaucracy. A long document was drawn up safeguarding not only the individual artist but the welfare of the production as a whole and providing for a sharp division between the financial and artistic functions of the theatre. Despite Bolshevik threats from Petrograd, Alexander Ivanovitch hewed to the course of the theatre as decided in council, regardless of the new political tyranny. Since the removal of the government to Moscow, his course has necessarily been more discreet. The theatre is simply waiting for the return of social order and peace.

My parting from Alexander Ivanovitch was as bitter as the greeting had been joyful. Two days before I left Moscow I called on him briefly in his apartment to say goodby. With a pause of hesitation, he asked me whether it would be possible for him to come to America and play such rôles as Shylock with an English-speaking company. I answered that I thought it might be arranged, and then, very simply, he asked: "But can a Russian come to America today without being ashamed that he is a Russian?" Here was the ruthless imprint of political march and countermarch on the sensitive soul of the artist.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in July in the public libraries of the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. Christopher and Columbus	*Anonymous*	DOUBLEDAY
2. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
3. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
4. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Secret City	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
6. A Land-Girl's Love Story	*Berta Ruck*	DODD, MEAD

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Christopher and Columbus	*Anonymous*	DOUBLEDAY
2. The Cricket	*Marjorie Benton Cooke*	DOUBLEDAY
3. Dangerous Days	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
4. Saint's Progress	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER
5. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
6. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
3. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
4. Dawn	*Eleanor H. Porter*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
5. The Desert of Wheat	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
6. The Magnificent Ambersons	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
3. The Soul of Ann Rutledge	*Bernie Babcock*	LIPPINCOTT
4. Secret Bread	*F. Tennyson Jesse*	DORAN
5. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
6. "Shavings"	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON

WESTERN STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Desert of Wheat	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
3. Christopher and Columbus	*Anonymous*	DOUBLEDAY
4. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Shadow of the Cathedral	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
6. The Secret City	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
2. The Arrow of Gold	*Joseph Conrad*	DOUBLEDAY
3. The Tin Soldier	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
4. Christopher and Columbus	*Anonymous*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The Cricket	*Marjorie Benton Cooke*	DOUBLEDAY
6. Saint's Progress	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2. Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3. The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
4. Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN
5. The Last Million	*Ian Hay*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
6. Far Away and Long Ago	*W. H. Hudson*	DUTTON

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2. Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3. Christopher	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4. The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
5. The Years Between	*Rudyard Kipling*	DOUBLEDAY
6. The New Revelation	*A. Conan Doyle*	DORAN

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2. Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3. Clemenceau: the Man and His Time	*H. M. Hyndman*	STOKES
4. The Years Between	*Rudyard Kipling*	DOUBLEDAY
5. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
6. Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays, and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN
2. Power of Will	*F. C. Haddock*	PELTON
3. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
4. With the Help of God and a Few Marines	*A. W. Catlin*	DOUBLEDAY
5. A Minstrel in France	*Harry Lauder*	HEARST'S
6. Bolshevism	*John Spargo*	HARPER

WESTERN STATES

1. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2. The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
3. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4. Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
5. Power of Will	*F. C. Haddock*	PELTON
6. Far Away and Long Ago	*W. H. Hudson*	DUTTON

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
2. Belgium	*Brand Whitlock*	APPLETON
3. Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters	*Robert Cortes Holliday*	DORAN
4. The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER
5. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
6. Bolshevism	*John Spargo*	HARPER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

THERE is testimony from a number of authoritative sources in this number of THE BOOKMAN as to the heartening nature of the book situation this fall. The Gossip Shop does not want to be outdone in optimism by the rest of the magazine. And so we greatly enjoy reporting something of our stimulating experience in a recent discussion of this matter with Robert W. Chambers, one of the most optimistic of the persons who know which way the wind blows in the world of books.

We commented on the fact that reports from booksellers indicate an increasing demand for the better things; and we asked Mr. Chambers if he saw any change in popular taste, and, if so, what kinds of books he thought were going to be in greatest demand?

"Popular taste", was the reply, "is always developing toward better things. Popular taste is demanding better workmanship in books, higher ideals, and substance of more importance. There will", he continued, "I think, be less reading for mere amusement during dull hours, and more reading for personal instruction —the only reading that ever satisfies. The lives of others", Mr. Chambers declared, "in whatever form offered, most deeply interest readers. Except for the universal craving to learn something about our fate after death, nothing so fascinates us as to recognize in a book some character resembling ourselves, and to follow its development toward good or evil, success or failure."

The phenomenal interest in fiction since the armistice, was mentioned. Mr. Chambers was asked if, in his opinion, there was any indication that the realistic novel was due for a setback, and if the war had materially affected the taste of the larger body of readers.

"Fashion and the trend of events," he said, "*do* affect the sort of books which are read by the public. The war, perhaps, has satisfied an appetite for realism for the time being. Good romance will be more widely read, perhaps. But all taste has broadened during the last four years, and it seems to me that all good work is going to have a better chance than ever."

The conversation then continued very much as follows:

"Do you think books can be made as universally popular as the movies? Or do you believe at all in books as a democratic recreation?"

"You might as well ask me which is to be the more popular, preachers or potatoes. I expect the world will continue to nourish itself with both."

"What eight or ten authors present and past most interest you?"

"Shakespeare, Homer, Pepys, Scott, Dickens, Macaulay, Dumas, Kipling, Fabre, Roosevelt."

"What do you think is the most conspicuous shortcoming of publishers in the presentation of their wares?"

"Solemnity."

"From a country of a few magazines of small circulation we have come to be the greatest periodical-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reading people in the world. Do you think it possible to develop the same interest in books?"

"Yes."

"Can you suggest the probable means by which this end can be accomplished? Is there any obvious popular tendency which might be utilized for this purpose?"

"The popular tendencies are toward self-betterment and toward diversion. Combine these two ingredients in a book and you have a beginning. The aroma is appetizing. But how to convey this perfume to two hundred million nostrils is, I think, not the job of the cook—otherwise the author—but of the proprietor of the restaurant—otherwise the publisher."

"It is commonly said that England produces better fiction than America. Do you think this is true? Do you see any signs of great promise in this country?"

"I think English workmanship is, perhaps, rather better than ours. English writers in general seem to be better prepared for their profession. There is in Europe, even in England, a paramount desire in the public mind—often unconscious—which practically is a necessity. I mean the necessity for beauty. A few among us have it. But I do believe it to be latent in all of us. It must awake—must know its own desire—must be conscious of necessity, anyway, before we Americans can attain that excellence of workmanship which is European, and, in a good measure, English."

"Do you think the spirit and life of the West are more likely to produce a great American novel than the spirit and life of the East?"

"I think not. We in the East have lost a little of our raw self-consciousness. The West seems to have lost none, so far. Many of us have forgotten that we happen to live east of the Mississippi. But the West has, so far, forgotten nothing. 'East is East and West is West', and there's no earthly reason why the twain shouldn't meet, mingle and merge, and take it for granted that it's all the same bunch and that 'the gang's all here'. But the West is always busy marking out the boundary which we never notice unless our attention is called to it. And it rather bores us."

"Do you think a novel finds its highest expression in realism or romanticism?"

"In both."

"Given good examples of each, which type do you think exerts the greater influence? Which type is the more likely to widen the circle of book readers?"

"It makes no difference what readers read as long as it is the best of its species."

"Do you think the complete stoppage of all fiction publishing would be a serious loss to the country?"

"Certainly, and to myself, financially."

"What type of story do you get the greatest satisfaction in writing?"

"Nonsense, possibly. Of course I mean intentional nonsense. I've been told I write both kinds."

"Do you think fiction should have any larger function than that of giving amusement?"

"Amusement, education, comfort, and stimulation to the imagination—imagination being the most necessary ingredient in any successful business."

"If you were addressing an audience which read practically no books, what would you say to convince such people of the value of books?"

"I'd say: 'If you'll read the right

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sort of books you'll get more out of life for your money and have a better time in the world, and have a better record when you migrate heavenward'."

"If you were addressing a convention of booksellers, what would you say to convince them of the vast potential possibilities of a greater book audience?"

"I'd say what I've said in this interview—if they'd be kind enough to listen. But I don't think they would. They're very busy people. Besides, on the day of his birth a bookseller knows more than any author on the day of his death. And perhaps the day after."

Johan Bojer's new book "The Face of the World", to be published early in November, deals with the new movement in revolutionary democracy. Following the publication of his book, Dr. Bojer is expected to visit America for the first time, when he will lecture on Norwegian literature at a number of American colleges.

Carolyn Wells communicates to the Gossip Shop the following:

"It is an oft-proved fact that some literary products, which would never have been read had they been spelled correctly, become best sellers because of their illiteracy. Best sellers are not always best spellers, and from Josh Billings to 'Dere Mable' misspelling has made for popularity. From 'Peck's Bad Boy' to 'Plupy Shute', from James Russell Lowell to Sam Walter Foss, many books have passed the illiteracy test and come out winners.

"John Hay, J. W. Riley, and Eugene Field all made Illiteration an artful aid, if not a prime factor, in their successes. Artemus Ward banked on it almost entirely, and in one phase or another it has won out in 'Chimmie Fadden' and his noble army of successors.

"With Illiteration, properly and consistently done, we have no quarrel. It is when it is inconsistent, incoherent, and untrue that we are moved to criticize it. When Plupy Shute wrote 'brite and fair', it was because he didn't know how to spell *bright*. When 'Little Breeches' said, 'I want a chaw of terbacker', that is the way he pronounced the words.

"But less careful pens try to represent the illiterate speech of a character by etymology that is merely wrong, without a right to be wrong. Authors use *sez, sed, whare, grate, shure, enuff, yew, naburs, wimmen, weskit, deth,* when telling what an ignorant character said. These are normal pronunciations, and a man does not spell when he talks. I have seen *truth* spelled both *trooth* and *trewth* in an attempt to produce an effect of illiteracy. Tales of the underworld, especially, show misused illiteracy, and few dialect writers are correct or even consistent in the style of language they fondly hope they portray.

"Uncle Remus never slipped up on his negro dialect, but ninety-nine out of a hundred writers of southern stories do. The masters of illiteracy builded well, but their imitators—really a crowd of pickpockets pilfering the chicken-feed of literature, succeed only in achieving inept Illiteration's artful aid. However, it often passes, as counterfeits will do; and it is probable that, so long as they are published, people will buy misspelled books by the trainload."

The many BOOKMAN readers who must have enjoyed the papers of his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Literary Reminiscences", contributed by William Webster Ellsworth to the June and August issues of the magazine, will be interested in the following note of the author's recollections:

"It was in 'the old office', as we called it, at 743 Broadway, that I remember seeing Helen Hunt Jackson. She came running up-stairs one morning overflowing with laughter, and Dr. Holland asked her what had so amused her. She was in New York trying to awaken an interest in the Indians. 'O those Bostonians', she said; 'I just met a Boston man on the street, and he asked me how I was getting on with my work in New York. "Slowly", I told him,—and, said the Boston man, "Well, I should think after that editorial in yesterday's Boston 'Advertiser', everybody in New York would be interested!" '

"Mrs. Jackson was a most prolific writer of fiction, poems, essays, travel articles, and every conceivable form of literature. Dr. Holland is said to have once had an idea of issuing a number of 'Scribner's Monthly' made up entirely of her work. She wrote the Saxe Holm st ries and at least two of the novels in the anonymous 'No Name series' which Roberts Brothers so successfully published. One of them was 'Mercy Philbrick's Choice'.

"The Saxe Holm stories were famous in their day. I have a number of letters from Mrs. Jackson to Dr. Holland, most of them referring to their writing. It was her intention at first to have 'Mercy Philbrick's Choice' appear over the Saxe Holm name, but for some reason she changed her mind, perhaps because the letters indicate that the magazine did not want it for a serial. She shows her pleasure later in the praise which came to 'Mercy Philbrick's Choice',—'very much stronger than any of the Saxe Holm stories and far better written', was one opinion; 'the style is exquisite', was another.

"In June, 1876, Mrs. Jackson considered the publication of an article in the New York 'Tribune' which was to be called 'A History of the Claimants', in which she would show up various people who said they wrote the Saxe Holm stories:

> . . . this whole account to be signed, sealed, and delivered by Saxe Holm himself, herself, itself, themselves, and published by authority. It is really time to put a stop to ..... and the rest. . . . *Three* women in different parts of the country all claiming to be the author of stories they never wrote! I think the article would be huge fun, besides advertising the new story splendidly.

"For some reason Mrs. Jackson did not wish the public to know that she was Saxe Holm. It was a literary puzzle once, but the Saxe Holm stories have not lived like 'Ramona', and it is on that book that Helen Hunt Jackson's reputation will rest."

The Gossip Shop records its entertainment in and its admiration for the noble poem "John L. Sullivan: the Strong Boy of Boston", by Vachel Lindsay, which was published in the issue of "The New Republic" of July 16. The poem is dedicated to Louis Untermeyer and Robert Frost. Several persons have written in their complaints that the poem did not appear in THE BOOKMAN. A portion of the poem follows:

In dear provincial 1889
Barnum's bears and tigers could astound.
Ingersoll was named along with Cain,
Voltaire, Apollyon, and Thomas Paine.
Robert Elsmere riled the pious brain.
Phillips Brooks for heresy was tried.
Boston Brahmins patronized Mark Twain.
The baseball rules were changed. That was
a gain.
Pop Anson was our darling and our pride.
Native sons in Irish votes were drowned.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tammany once more escaped its chain.
Once more each crimson dive was raising cain.
The mocking bird was singing in the lane . . .
Yet
"East side, west side, all around the town
The tots sang 'ring-a-rosie'
'London Bridge is falling down.'"
And . . .
John L. Sullivan
The strong boy
Of Boston
Finished the ring career of Jake Kilrain.

A London book-lover writes the Gossip Shop:

"A great many people, apart from the one fortunate individual concerned, are rejoicing in the foundation of the Hawthornden Prize. It is a curious fact that the first time such a prize for the encouragement of imaginative literature has been founded in England should be owing to the public-spirited action of a woman—Alice Warrender is a reader, not a writer, and she is one of the three sisters of the late Admiral Sir George Warrender. One of these ladies has written two charming books dealing with the Scotland of yesterday; but, taken as a whole, the Warrender family are readers, not writers, though henceforth their name will be forever gratefully associated with the finer kind of literature—the kind of literature that is written with no thought of earthly reward. The Hawthornden Prize is to be awarded to the author of a distinguished work, either in prose or poetry, published during the twelve months before the award. The committee is a small but very distinguished one, consisting as it does of Laurence Binyon, the poet; Edward Marsh, editor of "Georgian Poetry" and known to many Americans as the courteous official young private secretary of Winston Churchill; and J. C. Squire, perhaps the most brilliant of the younger London critics. Both achievement and promise will be taken into account, and the only condition laid down is that the writer should not be over forty years of age.

"The writer recently had the privilege of hearing Sir James Barrie on the subject of 'The Young Visiters'. He was being heckled, if one may use that familiar Scotticism, by a number of fair ladies, one of whom thought he had written the now famous book himself. The idea that he did so, though it has gained a certain amount of credence in London literary society, is probably false; but certain shrewd critics are asking themselves whether the supposed authoress really wrote the *whole* of her extraordinary tale at the tender age of nine, or whether, like many more famous writers, she did not revise her masterpiece in later years, adding perhaps a little here and a little there. There are, for instance, one or two singular coincidences with regard to passages in 'The Young Visiters' and to certain plays and books undoubtedly written by Sir James Barrie. But these are regarded as more likely to have been interpolated by an ardent admirer than to be the actual work of Sir James himself. Genius does not repeat itself.

"Just as virtue is sometimes its own reward, so the writer of the kind of fine and distinguished work which only struggles slowly into popularity sometimes has a piece of what one may call real luck. This most pleasing accident has befallen Ethel Colbourne Mayne, whom all those interested in the art of the short story have long known to be one of its most distinguished exponents. Miss Col-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bourne Mayne, whose work is never seen in any of the popular English magazines, has won the prize in the 'Land and Water' short-story competition, the judges being Arnold Bennett and Joseph Conrad. Of the successful story Mr. Bennett, with that judgment which is as shrewd as it is infallible, divined that it was by a woman, and declared that it showed real individuality, which none of the other stories showed. Another story by the same lady (who chose the very curious pseudonym of 'Eleven') was given a high place by Mr. Conrad. Ethel Colbourne Mayne has written, in a book entitled 'Things that No One Tells', stories which in finished excellence compare with some of the best of Thomas Hardy's work. She also wrote a life of Byron which few people are aware largely inspired one of Maurice Hewlett's fine historical novels.

" 'Good stories' are popular in every country and in every clime, and thus there is sure to be a public in America for the memoir of George Russell who was perhaps the most famous of Victorian *raconteurs*. Mr. Russell looked as if he had stepped out of one of Thackeray's, or perhaps it would be truer to say out of one of Anthony Trollope's novels. He was a big, burly, cheerful-looking Englishman, first cousin to the Duke of Bedford, and related to half the British peerage. As a young man he was one of the most familiar figures in fashionable London ballrooms; as an old man he was an indefatigable diner-out; and yet he might have been described with perfect truth as a Christian socialist! Russell had an interesting and striking personality, and no man could tell a witty story with a more delicate and brilliant appreciation of its point. He used to complain, with truth, that the best of his stories, those which concerned living people, could not be put into print. Of his books, the best known is perhaps 'Collections and Recollections'. It is to be hoped that his biographer will provide new matter, in the shape of Mr. Russell's correspondence. Not long before his death he was described by a good judge as 'the last of the letter-writers'!

"I hear that George Moore is engaged on a book which should be his masterpiece, for the subject of it is one of peculiar fascination to such a mind as his. This book, on which he has been engaged some time and which is not nearly finished, tells once more, in the shape of a romance, the immortal story of Abelard and Héloïse. George Moore is more concerned with Héloïse than with the man she loved; he regards her as having been cast in an heroic mould, the type of human being who immolates himself or herself for the sake of the beloved. I gather that the great Irish writer has certain doubts as to the authenticity of the famous love-letters. Yet it is those letters which have made the tragic lovers famous throughout the ages. There is of course far less doubt with regard to Abelard's very few letters to his beloved; they are undoubtedly authentic."

Even in Japan there are after-the-war bookworms who would model the world a little nearer to the heart's desire, and who are interested in literary recipes therefor. Hitherto our Far Eastern ally has seemed rather indifferent to the searchings of conscience and the lamentations for this sorry scheme of things which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the war elicited from Europe and America.

At any rate, a Japanese newspaper, the "Nichi Nichi", reports through the medium of the "Kobe Chronicle" that there is a sudden interest in literature dealing with the social problems of our time, especially those affecting government and the reorganization of industry. Magazines of socialistic or sociological nature spring into existence almost overnight and flourish like the tree by the rivers of water. A publication entitled "Shakwai-shugai Kenkyu" (Study of Socialism), edited by two well-known socialists, bounded from a circulation of fifty for the first number to five thousand for the second. Professor Kawakami, whose book "Japan and World Peace" has recently appeared in America, edits a magazine devoted to the study of social problems which is becoming increasingly popular. Its most interested readers are the students at the universities and the members of great capitalistic firms. The women's magazines and religious publications, not to be outdone by these specialized rivals in a now popular field, are printing articles on socialism and economic readjustment.

This change in public taste is also felt by the importers of foreign books. Maruzen, who is in some sense the Brentano of Japan, and whose beautiful many-floored, many-aisled shop in Tokyo is a very haven to an occidental book-lover in exile, reports that there is now a decided run on books in English and French on the labor question. Next in popularity are discussions of democracy and general social reconstruction. For a time there was a demand for books in Russian concerning the Bolsheviki. No doubt these came mostly from the multitudes of Russian refugees now harbored in Japan. But it was so difficult to get information directly from Russia that the exiles are now consoling themselves with more general discussions of revolution and reform imported from America, England, or France. Of the literary idols of a few years ago—Ibsen, Strindberg, Maeterlinck, and Shaw,—whose works once sold like wild fire in Tokyo, only Shaw retains his popularity. This, perhaps, is a tribute to his socialism rather than to his dramatic art.

This sudden tide of interest among magazines is stimulating publishers to rivalry in bringing out socialistic books. In book circles in Japan one of the most absorbing questions is, "Who shall be the first to translate Karl Marx?" A version of "Das Kapital" was begun some time ago by two well-known economic experts, but was abandoned because it was thought that the public was not ready for it. Since then, it seems, the public has developed. "Das Kapital", however, is not light reading. Its translation taxes the language and logic of the profoundest of Japanese economists. Three pages a day is all that the ablest translator can manage. One scholar thinks he could finish the whole job in ten years, bringing out a volume of three hundred to four hundred pages each year. Several publishers are interested in the proposal —but who knows whether this violent spurt of interest in things socialistic will last ten years? If it does, there may soon be, in imperialistic and capitalistic Japan, small leisure and peace for any reading.

They were, Oliver Herford and another member of the club, showing a guest over The Players. The keys were got from the hat-check boy and the party ascended to look over the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

collection of death masks. They came to the death mask of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. It is next to the Shakespeare of the full-featured countenance. Quite different from the Sheridan. Said the guest, gazing at the Sheridan mask: "Why, how unlike one's thought of the man. Looks quite ascetic." "Well," remarked Mr. Herford, "you know he wasn't feeling very well when that was taken."

The first anniversary of the death in action of the late Joyce Kilmer, Sergeant in the Intelligence Department of the 165th Infantry, the old "Fighting Sixty-ninth", occurred on July 30. The memorial edition of Kilmer's work, "Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters", has sold more than eight thousand sets since the publication of the book late in December. A Kilmer window display shown for a number of weeks in Boston, and as a library exhibit elsewhere in Massachusetts, where it attracted much attention, has recently been brought to New York and exhibited at the Lord and Taylor bookstore. This display includes the Croix de Guerre posthumously conferred on the soldier-poet by the French Government, the large and very beautiful Citation which accompanied it, and a number of Kilmer's poems in the original manuscript. The manuscript poems include "In Memory of Lieutenant Rupert Brooke", "The Apartment House", "Wartime Christmas", "Thanksgiving", and "The Rosary". The forthcoming volume, by the way, "Father Duffy's Story", by Francis P. Duffy, the Major-Chaplain of the "Sixty-ninth", includes an Historical Appendix by Joyce Kilmer.

"He awoke in the morning to a great self-loathing: he had kissed a girl. Mingled with the loathing was a curious pride in the very fact that caused the loathing." "He" is, presumably, Ramsey Milholland. The Gossip Shop had just opened Mr. Tarkington's latest book, "Ramsey Milholland", and that line, somewhere in the body of the book, was the first line upon which rested the eye of the Gossip Shop. The publishers say of the book that it is "the story of a Penrod coming to manhood; a William Sylvanus Baxter facing life's greatest drama".

The Harvard Club of Cincinnati has put into fine binding a number of copies of "Walking-Stick Papers" to be given to students gaining the highest scholarships in the Cincinnati High Schools. This club has been furnishing these awards for the last five years.

The second edition of Grant M. Overton's book, "The Women Who Make Our Novels", has three added chapters, on Mary E. Waller, Zona Gale and Mary Heaton Vorse respectively, bringing the book to about four hundred pages and the contents to thirty-five chapters on thirty-five American writers, all living except Amelia E. Barr. Zona Gale has contributed an autobiographical letter. Mary E. Waller shuns publicity, and Mary Heaton Vorse is now abroad, but both will be found adequately treated.

Harry A. Franck, the celebrated "vagabond journey" man, some time ago married Miss Rachel W. Latta of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia.

It is announced that Mary Pickford has secured from the publishers the motion picture rights of "Pollyanna" and "Pollyanna Grows Up", by Eleanor H. Porter. The two glad books, it is said, have reached a combined

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

number of fifty-six editions, with total copies sold to date of nearly three-quarters of a million copies. Translations have also been published in a number of foreign countries including Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Japan. The "glad girl" picture will probably appear early in 1920.

John Kendrick Bangs was in the other day, that is one day late in July. Appeared to be in splendid health. Just back from France, Mr. Bangs was on his way to California for a visit of a couple of months. Mr. Bangs has been a friend of THE BOOKMAN since the days of the editorship of Harry Thurston Peck, and a frequent contributor to the magazine.

Richardson Wright, author of the article "Literary Furniture" in the August BOOKMAN, and author of various books, editor of "House and Garden", and prime mover in the organization known as "The Small Fry" (which we believe was, unfortunately, put on the blink by the war), has made purchase of a house at Silvermine, near New Canaan, Connecticut. There is now a considerable literary and artistic "colony" at Silvermine. In days before there was any literary and artistic colony there, the Gossip Shop (he was not the Gossip Shop then) used to live there.

That wag, our friend the literary supplement of the New York "Sun", remarks of "The Young Visiters" by Daisy Ashford—the literary topic of the hour by a nine-year-old girl—that: "One aspect of Daisy's conquest is especially gratifying. Lo! a sterling new departure in the shape of an English first novel whose hitherto unknown author is not suspected of being Mr. Wells!"

The literary page of the New York "Tribune", in its feature "About a Column", comments, apropos of the recent appearance of a volume of collected fugitive pieces by Walter Pater, on the fact that there is no "satisfactory biography of this master stylist". Mr. Benson, Mr. Wright and Edward Thomas have essayed the subject, and a short symposium with critical tendencies was offered some years ago by Ferris Greenslet; but "he remains still the will-o'-the-wisp of literary fields", and "the worthiest insight we have to his work is a twenty-five-page essay of Edward Dowden".

William Morton Payne, literary critic, died in Chicago about the middle of July after an illness of several weeks. Mr. Payne was sixty-one years of age and had lived in Chicago since 1868. As a critic he was chiefly concerned with modern literature in English, French, German, Italian, and Scandinavian.

Walter Jack Duncan, whose drawings for the articles by Rose Cohen which appeared in this magazine some time last year, are probably still remembered by BOOKMAN readers, was apparently the last of the eight American artists chosen by the War Department to return from the late Western front. Captain Duncan "blew in" late in July. Though he has been fairly well known as an illustrator for a number of years, it would doubtless be a surprise to many of Captain Duncan's personal friends to learn the distinguished connection of his family for several generations with another art—that of the theatre. His great-grandfather, John Rowland Reed, was connected with the Philadelphia theatres upward of seventy-five years; and his son was the comedian

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Roland Reed. Florence Reed, Roland Reed's only daughter, is a cousin of the artist. Duncan's grandfather was John Jack, a figure of the stage for fifty-five years, whose Falstaff his friend James Whitcomb Riley, among others, declared to be the best ever presented on the American stage, and whose Sir Anthony Absolute, a finished expression of his own fine old eighteenth-century personality, for seasons manifold shared the first honors with Jefferson's Bob Acres in Sheridan's comedy "The Rivals". Captain Duncan's mother, too, was connected with the stage from early childhood till her marriage, playing with such actors as Booth, Jefferson, and Mac Cullough.

Those who have read both books say that an interesting case of parallelism in fiction is afforded by Rider Haggard's new romance, "When the World Shook", and "The Gilded Man", by Clifford Smyth, editor of the New York "Times Review of Books", published last year. In each story apparently the action leads up to the descent of the principal characters into an immense cave in the bowels of the earth. In each story the venturing party find great marvels as they penetrate further and further into the cave's wonders. Both caves are beautifully and weirdly illuminated by radium, and the climax of each story takes place in the far recesses of the cave, with radium playing a leading part in what happens. The scene of Mr. Haggard's romance is an island in the South Seas, while Mr. Smyth's tale of adventure, romance and mystery is located in Colombia, far up in the Andes Mountains.

The O. Henry Hotel was opened at Greensboro, North Carolina, late in July, and the Greensboro "Daily News" published a special O. Henry edition in recognition of the event. In this edition, which showed how warmly the little Southern city appreciates the honor of having given birth to such a genius, appeared a short story belonging to O. Henry's early career, and not collected in any book—"The Cactus", originally published in "Everybody's" in 1906. Together with this was a sheaf of reminiscences of O. Henry, or as he is usually called, Will Porter, by his old friends and neighbors in Greensboro. Various citizens recalled well the local pride in his youthful ability as a draughtsman and the daring predictions of his associates that if he pursued his bent he would perhaps become as great a man as the cartoonist Nast. One remarked that "never did a humorist have a better opportunity to study the characteristics of humanity than Will Porter, for in the early days of Greensboro very few of its citizens were in a hurry, and the drugstore was the hang-out of all the old-timers". He was, it was reported, a most assiduous reader. His wit is remembered, and the paper gave some quotations from humorous letters which he wrote to home-town friends from Texas. The issue included at least a dozen pictures of the hotel, which apparently contains no other memorial to the author than a steel engraving of him. It ought, remarks the New York "Evening Post", to have a small library, at least, with O. Henry's books in prominent place.

About five times as much like the following (only more so) is devoted to Miss Amy Lowell by Clement K. Shorter in one of his recent "Literary Letters" to the London "Sphere":

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At Mr. John Quinn's dinner-table in New York I seemed rather to startle Mr. Godkin, the son of the famous publicist and editor, by saying that I counted Miss Lowell as the assured "Cham" of American letters today. Yet no one suggested a rival name. Miss Lowell has a fine head—her portraits do not do her justice. Someone has found a likeness in her to Henry VIII., but she has none of the Tudor cruelty, and indeed I found her a marvel of kindliness and generosity. She is, by the way, a great collector—the only book-collector I have ever found among women—and her rare books and manuscripts are a delight to me, including as they do the manuscript of "The Eve of St. Agnes", with many corrections by the poet, and countless autographed books of Shelley, Coleridge, and other great authors. You will say, gentle reader, that I have quite lost my head over an author of whom you have at present heard but little in England. Time, however, will justify me, and I am proud of my prescience.

In this same "Letter" to "The Sphere" Mr. Shorter pictures the peculiarities of American newspapers:

There is nothing so bewildering to an English journalist visiting America as the status of the staff of a great newspaper or magazine. In England every journal has its editor, assistant editor, and sundry sub-editors. These words have no meaning here, where an "editor" is simply a member of the staff. An ordinary newspaper has an editor-in-chief or managing editor. In New York the latter word prevails, elsewhere the former. It has a manager, an advertising manager, and a circulation manager, these two last enjoying precisely the same status. The circulation manager flies all over the neighbourhood in his motor car attempting to secure subscriptions. Newsagents and bookstalls, which play so great a part in the circulation of the English newspaper, have a quite minor importance in the United States. I have seen many newspapers with a circulation of 200,000 of which only 10,000 are due to casual sales; all the rest are by annual subscription, and the paper is delivered at the house.

Hextra! Hextra! Latest News of Tristram Shandy! Here you are, sir! Awful catastrophe! Tristram Shandy Gentleman, whose last appearance in the public prints was on the occasion a couple of weeks ago, of his eating a pair of eight-dollar shell spectacles, has just devoured a one-week-old straw hat of the cost of eight dollars with, in addition, a thirty-cent luxury tax. Mr. Shandy does not fancy dog biscuits.

Having been one of the first in the war and among the last back to peace, the Rainbow Division is now taking its rightful place in the hearts of its countrymen through "The Story of the Rainbow Division". Raymond S. Tompkins, formerly war correspondent of the Baltimore "Sun", has made a very successful and readable book of the division's eventful history. In the first part of the "Rainbow's" story there is little with which the war-fed reader is not familiar, for the actions of the 42nd are already engraved in history. In his reminiscences of the Occupation, on the other hand, Mr. Tompkins touches newer ground. The long, long march, the problem of "fraternizin", are treated with the spontaneous humor of one who, looking back over many months and three thousand miles, finds much that appears unexpectedly amusing. The volume has an introduction by Major-General Charles T. Menoher, who commanded the Rainbow Division in all its battles.

Two weeks before the treaty of peace was signed there passed out of existence that unique expression of modern journalism "The Stars and Stripes", the very own newspaper of the Yanks across the sea. It was, as the country already knows, a tremendous success from the business office to the artist's room. It was the first use of a newspaper as part of a national fighting machine in war. It was the fighting reported by soldiers for soldiers. Complete files of "The Stars and Stripes" are few, and al-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ready it is next to impossible to get them. But many of the best stories that appeared in "The Stars and Stripes", together with reproductions of many of C. Leroy Baldridge's drawings, are being published as a book under the title, "The Command Is Forward". These stories were written by Sergeant Alexander Woollcott, a well-known dramatic critic of New York.

Leonard Merrick who was born in London, was intended for the bar. That is to say, his father looked forward to his becoming a barrister, though what Merrick himself wanted to do was to write, and act. Before the boy could go to Heidelberg, where he was to complete his education, his father had suffered sudden financial reverses. The bar was out of the question now. Instead of starting life as a wealthy man's son, Merrick was facing the need for earning a bare subsistence. At the age of eighteen, he had exchanged luxury for a job at the South African diamond mines. He stood all day superintending the labors of Zulus and Kaffirs in a temperature of 100° in the shade, and slept in a tin hut at the foot of the tailings' heap. His next post was in the local court-house. He was in a solicitor's office in Kimberley for nearly two years, and came near to dying of camp fever before he succeeded in returning to London. And in London, at the age of twenty-one, he did manage to "go on the stage" at last. It was then that he adopted the surname of "Merrick". It is now his own, by legal process. He was formerly "Leonard Miller". His experience as an actor was very brief.

Dorothy Scarborough says in the preface to "From a Southern Porch", a book of essays soon to appear:

> Books in abundance have been written about houses and the people who live in them as there are various volumes concerning gardens and the joy of digging in the patient earth. But nobody has written a book about porches, which seems to me monstrous ingratitude. For how many works of literature have been composed on porches or inspired by them! How often has Pegasus got a famous start from some rocking-chair on a dreamy veranda! And how many stodgy books there are, which might have leaped and run filled with vinous life, if only they had been porch-written! . . . The porch is the soul of a house. . . .

In a letter from William Ives Washburn, Jr., the Gossip Shop is informed that "the date of birth of the new magazine, 'Romance'," is approaching. Mr. Washburn was formerly with the Century Company; went into the army; upon his return to civil life was for a brief period with George H. Doran Company; and is now associate editor of "Adventure". With his letter to the Gossip Shop Mr. Washburn encloses a terse and modest description of the new magazine. This description is in galley proof form. Two of these galleys suffice to tell the story. Each galley proof is (exactly) two feet and one inch in length. The matter, by the way, is set in six point. It starts out: "When a magazine claims romance as its field, there is need for some defining of the term." An excerpt from the definition is this:

"So the field of *Romance* stretches from our daily footsteps not only back into all time but broadly into all the world."

"Romance" solicits stories of romance. The magazine makes its initial bow with a serial by Joseph Conrad.

Margaret Deland has been spending the summer at Kennebunkport, Maine, the place put on the map by the summer residence there of B. T.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED